

Being Heard: Promoting children's participation in research and global events on sexual violence

Being Heard provides an opportunity for researchers to share and discuss appropriate tools to guide researchers and donors on how to engage children and young people on sexual violence research.



The Sexual Violence Research Initiative is hosted by the South African Medical Research Council



Being Heard is a collaborative project between the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and the University of Bedfordshire's International Centre. Funded by the Oak Foundation, it aims to promote the ethical and meaningful participation of children and young people in both research and international events on sexual violence, including at conferences relevant to their research.

RESEARCH GAPS AND PROJECT AIMS

There is increasing emphasis on child and stakeholder involvement in research, and children's participation in responses to sexual violence. Being Heard recognises the critical importance of understanding the best approaches to facilitating young people's participation at conferences and as researchers and future leaders in efforts to reduce violence against children and improve service responses. It also recognises that young people, including those who are at risk of or have experienced sexual violence, may need tailored support to help them give voice to their experiences in a safe and meaningful way.

The project offers an opportunity for researchers, practitioners and young people to actively engage on how to realise the rights of young people to participate in research and its application, and in international events such as SVRI Forum 2017. Specifically, it aims to:

- Develop the knowledge and skills of SVRI members and affiliates to undertake participatory research on sexual violence against young people.
- Enable young people aged 18-24 with experience of being involved in research on sexual and other forms of violence to participate in SVRI Forum 2017, in order to identify more effective ways to include children and youth at these types of conferences.
- Ensure child participation is a key theme at the Forum.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Promote engagement and participation of young people

The project is supporting 10 young researchers and five nongovernmental organisation counterparts from low- and middle-income countries who have been involved in research on violence to attend SVRI Forum 2017. They will participate in a pre-conference meeting on reviewing and revising approaches to youth research, attend conference sessions and share their experiences with Forum members.

To ensure that child participation is a key theme at the Forum, the project will:

- Host a pre-conference workshop.
- Develop minimum standards for engaging young people in global research events.
- Have discussions with young people via different online platforms on ways to involve them in conferences on sexual violence research.
- Create a video that documents young people's experiences at the Forum and what they learnt from it.

Strengthen knowledge and skills

Being Heard provides an opportunity for researchers to share and discuss appropriate tools to guide researchers and donors on how to engage children and young people on sexual violence research. As part of this effort, the project team is undertaking a global review of participatory research on sexual violence and will host a pre-conference workshop on this at SVRI Forum 2017. The project is also providing several bursaries for researchers to attend the Forum.

All project products are being shared with SVRI members and affiliates through SVRI Update, on online platforms and at SVRI Forum 2017.

For more information on the project, visit <http://www.svri.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/projects/being-heard>.