



# Improving Justice in Child Contact

## **In preparation for the session, please:**

- ✓ Use your name and your organisation, as your zoom identity (e.g. Kay Tisdall, University of Edinburgh)
- ✓ Say hello on the chat function and introduce yourself
- ✓ If you have difficulties with accessing zoom, ask for assistance in the chat function
- ✓ During the plenary session, we will ask you to mute your microphone and turn off your video
- ✓ We will be recording the plenary session (but not the discussion groups)

## ABOUT IJCC

Improving Justice in Child Contact (IJCC) aims to improve children and young people's participation in decision-making around child contact for families affected by domestic violence.

- By 'child contact' we mean communication (such as phone calls or spending time) between a child and a parent who are not regularly living together.
- By 'participation' we refer to children's human rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children have a range of participation rights, including the right to express their views freely in matters that affect them and for those views to be considered seriously.

IJCC is a project across five European countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Portugal, Romania and Scotland) running from November 2018 to November 2020. Each country is exploring models for children and young people to participate and working with stakeholders to eliminate the barriers for, and enhance the mechanisms that support, children and young people's participation.

More information is available on our website.

[www.ed.ac.uk/education/ijcc](http://www.ed.ac.uk/education/ijcc)

## OUR YOUNG ADVISERS

Improving Justice in Child Contact is advised by a group of young experts, called Yello!, who have previous experience of participation work. The young people are aged between 12 and 18 and have experience of domestic violence.



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## **Participation**

**It is not a project**

**It's a right.**

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- ✓ We will be recording the plenary session (but not the discussion groups). Please do not record the webinar yourself or take screenshots of the young people's presentation, to protect young people's confidentiality.
- ✓ If you are on Twitter, please use the hashtag #JusticeInChildContact and copy us in at @CRFRtweets.
- ✓ The webinar is dealing with sensitive issues. Please take care of yourself and others. Women Against Violence Europe have information on specialist services across Europe at [www.wave-network.org/find-help](http://www.wave-network.org/find-help)



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**Children and Young People Participation  
is not a Project,  
It's a Right!**



UMAR - Portugal

# Children's rights at the Core

What are the main concerns we still hear at the shelters,  
at the service centres?

UMAR applied to the IJCC project, along with CESIS, in order to find ways to join  
children's rights with women's rights



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# How was Power Up-Power Down introduced in Portugal?

## The PU-PD methodology:

- ✓ first introduced at our Multistakeholders Forum
- ✓ six Power Up-Power Down sessions at 'Universo D.'
- ✓ with a group of boys and girls aged between 7 and 11 years old



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# The Young Expert Group 2nd Participation Model The Advisory Panel

**A group of young adults...**

We invited five young men and women who had previously experienced domestic violence in their lives and who had been in contact with the judiciary system, be this either at criminal or family (contacts) proceedings



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## The Young Expert Group resonates with:

- ✓ the need for children to be heard in legal proceedings and, at the same time, to feel safe and comfortable;
- ✓ the need to have professionals with a specialized background and profile, able to empathize and understand children in their context and developmental stage, giving them the opportunity to express their views;
- ✓ often children don't feel safe, saying that they don't know what is going to happen to them, as well as not fully understanding the information provided to them.



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**In the meanwhile COVID 19 kicked in  
and we continued our sessions virtually!**

# Regarding difficulties/solutions...

- ✓ Challenging to implement the PU-PD methodology in just six sessions;
- ✓ 2020 – The 30th celebration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- ✓ Stakeholders' engagement.



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# On the Impact of PU-PD/YEG on organisations and roles...

- ✓ Interest shown by some institutions;
- ✓ Enabling networking and reinforcing liaisons;
- ✓ Portuguese strategy - meet with stakeholders in bilateral meetings.



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**This is just the beginning!**



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**Children and Young  
People Participation  
is not a Project,  
It's a Right!**

**THANK YOU!!!**



**UMAR - Portugal**

# Participation & policy: Yello! and the Children (Scotland) Act



**Susie Dalton**

Children and Young People's Policy Officer

Scottish Women's Aid



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## Yello!'s work on the Act

- » Discussed at length with SWA and support workers
- » Yello! met with Minister for Community Safety to discuss recommendations
- » Written evidence submitted to Justice Committee
- » Invited to give evidence in person at Scottish Parliament
- » Continued to advise SWA throughout Bill's journey



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# Yello!'s priority areas included:

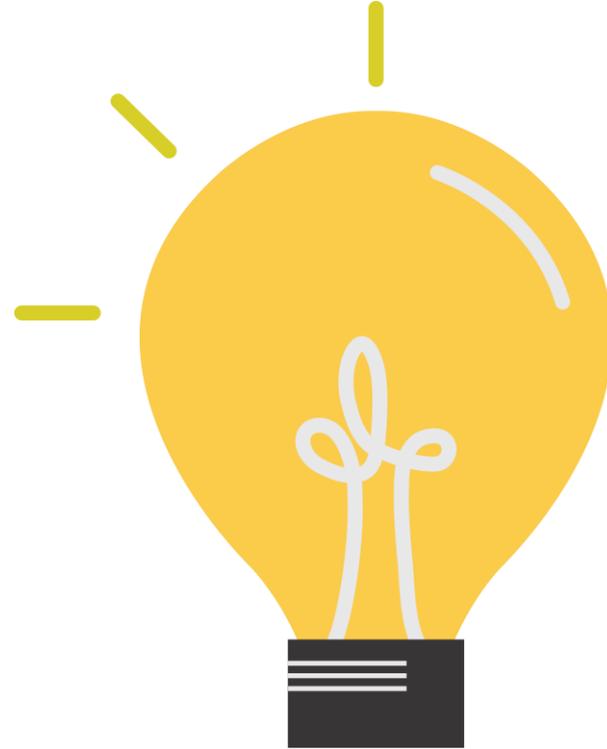
Participation

Confidentiality

Support and advocacy

Contact centres

Complaints system



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# Yello!'s recommendations in the Act

- » More protection for CYP to **give their views** in the way they want, whatever age they are
- » Increased **confidentiality** of their personal information in the courts
- » Access to **support and advocacy workers**
- » Further work to come in secondary legislation on contact centres and child welfare reporters





Rona Mackay, MSP – Stage 3  
Debate, Children (Scotland) Bill



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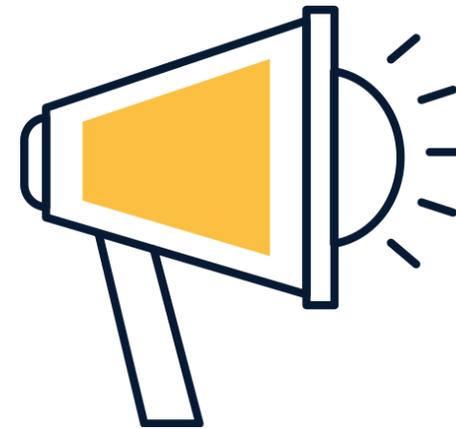
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# Yello!'s impact on Scottish Women's Aid's work

## Beyond the act:

Implementation

UNCRC incorporation (system of redress)



Reminder of the importance of CYP speaking directly to power



## Discussion Groups

- ✓ You will be automatically sent to your discussion group (and one group will stay on the main zoom).
- ✓ You will be returned automatically in 30 minutes.
- ✓ You will have one of the partners facilitating your discussion group. Your group will not be recorded.
- ✓ If for some reason you are disconnected, please re-join the main webinar link which you had through your registration email.



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# The weave of the tapestry: children's and women's rights in life and policy

Dr Marsha Scott

Scottish Women's Aid

2 November 2020



## What causes domestic abuse? Scotland's *causal story*

- » Women's inequality is the cause and consequence of violence against women [inc domestic abuse]
- » Children's human rights, like their mothers', can not be realised in a patriarchal system
- » Children treated as "property" in our systems (child contact) and their mothers as servants of the patriarchal family





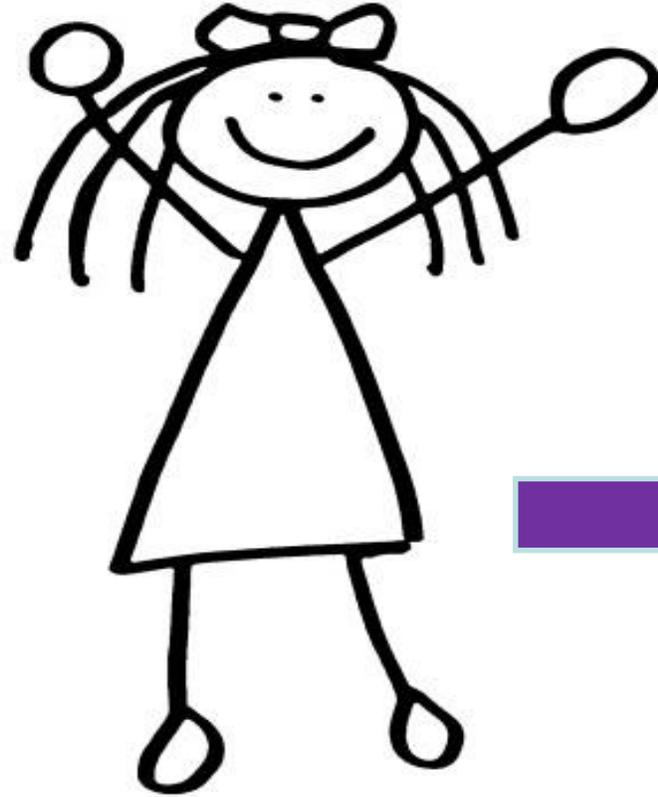
**Human  
Rights =  
space for  
action**



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Reality for ALL  
women and children  
(and some men):  
*Constrained space  
for action.*

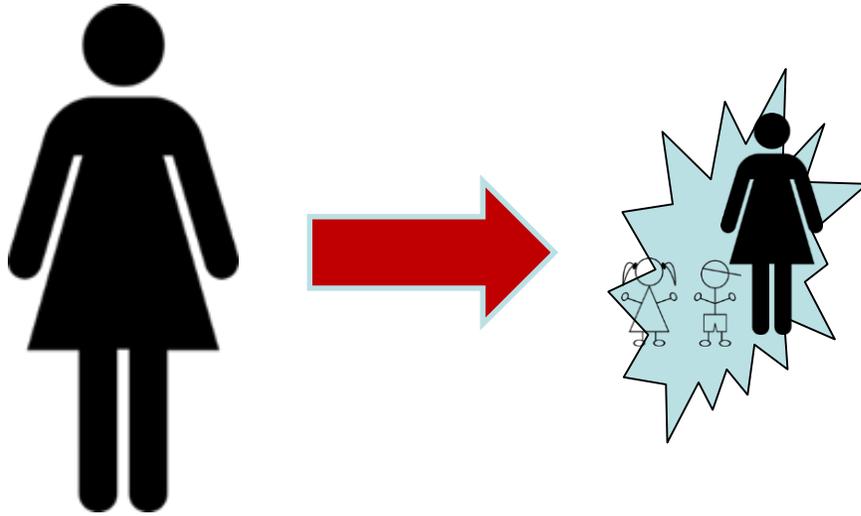


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*Constrained space for action. Then  
add domestic abuse.*



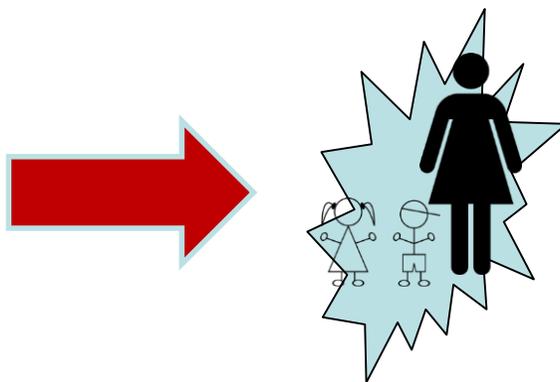
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**Constrained space for action. Then  
add domestic abuse.**

Safe place to live?  
Food on the table?  
Lawyer? Protection  
order? Get to job?  
Child care? Get  
deported? Leave  
everything behind?  
Bring the dog?



**Inequality = *Constraints* on  
children's and women's spaces  
and spheres for action; poverty of  
power, income, safety**



# Children's and women's lives are inextricably woven together

- » Successful policy advocacy and campaigns require a shared lens.
- » Joint children's rights and women's rights campaigns are powerful and creative.



# No more important work...



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### To conclude ...

- ✓ See website for other project information and outputs [www.ed.ac.uk/education/ijcc](http://www.ed.ac.uk/education/ijcc)
- ✓ If you are looking for advice or information about domestic violence, see Women Against Violence Europe have information on specialist services across Europe at [www.wave-network.org/find-help](http://www.wave-network.org/find-help)



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## The Project PARTNERS



Matter of Focus



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
Moray House School of  
Education and Sport



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