

## Shifting the youth research paradigm

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There are numerous examples of young people being engaged in research. However, one struggles to find examples of young people taking ownership of the process. 'Young people cannot be dealt with in terms of single issues or policies. We have emotions, feelings, physical and mental needs. We know when we are being listened to, and right now no one is prepared to look at the whole picture' (Young researcher 2007). As researchers our work influences actions and policies at every level, the impact on young people can be immense. We need to ensure that young people's voices are heard in our research. This presentation highlights the degree to which action research with and by young people can facilitate an alternative way to inform dialogue on issues and policies that impact on their lives.