



**SCOUTS  
GUIDES**  
DE FRANCE ⚔



# Youth Council Kit

September 2019



## PRESENTATION

A Youth Council is a space where young people can freely express themselves, and their voices are not influenced by adults. They discuss, debate, deliberate, and the outcome of their discussions is brought to the various levels of the association: groups and territories.

### *How does it work in practice?*

A council should be relatively formal to emphasize the importance of youth participation, but it should also leave room for creativity and diverse facilitation techniques. Here are the main steps to structure the council:

- Opening session: Present the agenda, elect presidents and secretaries for the session, introduce the questions submitted by the group or territory, or decide on a theme to discuss. If there was a previous council, review the progress made since then (e.g., summarizing the local councils at the start of a territorial youth council).
- Discussion time: This can take various forms over different periods. Use tools that encourage varied, playful participation and allow young people to explore democratic processes (debate facilitation techniques, voting methods, etc.). See the "Toolkit for facilitating the council."
- Deliberation session: Participants consolidate their discussions and formulate a commitment, proposal, or voting outcome (advisory or otherwise) to be presented to the group or territory.
- Closing session: Present the decisions to the appropriate body, commit to implementing the proposals, set future deadlines, etc.

Youth voices MUST have an impact. It is crucial to link councils with existing structures. For instance, councils can be partially or fully integrated into group councils, territorial councils, or territorial assemblies. Councils can also appoint ambassadors to carry their proposals to other bodies. It is essential to monitor and evaluate the implementation of council decisions and provide feedback to the council.

### *What do young people discuss during a council?*

Groups or territories can identify topics for consulting young people, gathering their ideas, or involving them in decisions. These topics can be proposed to the young participants.

*Advantage : Council decisions can significantly influence group or territory projects.*

Themes for discussion can also be chosen by the young participants beforehand or at the beginning of the council.

*Advantage : Young people are involved in every step of the council.*

### ***What is the purpose of a Youth Council?***

A Youth Council can serve several purposes:

- Consultation: *Gathering youth opinions on a specific topic or consulting them on an issue that concerns them.*
- Proposal : *Discussing a theme and submitting the results to the group or territory. This proposal may explicitly request a response or reaction.*
- Inquiry : *Addressing a question to their group or territory.*
- Commitment : *Discussing a theme and initiating a project they will carry out themselves.*
- Joint decision-making: *Collaborating with adults in decision-making processes.*

### ***Who participates? Who facilitates?***

Young people !

Young participants discuss a common theme. Sessions can include age-specific activities for tailored discussions but should encourage inter-age exchanges.

All young people should ideally be involved at the local level. If this isn't feasible, representatives can be chosen by their peers to voice their opinions.

Young participants should also take on facilitation roles, including serving as presidents or secretaries. They can also be involved in preparation. Companions can lead the process as a short-term team project or individually.

Adults should not participate in discussions—councils are exclusively for youth expression. Leaders and coordinators can facilitate the council and ensure smooth operations but must remain neutral, avoiding influence on the young participants.

Those preparing the council, whether young people or adults, can seek support from the Youth Council Coordinator or territorial team.

Additional resources include:

- Toolkit "for facilitating the council"
- Practical guide "Adults"
- Practical guide "President"
- Practical guide "Secretary"
- Report "Feedback on territorial experiments"

# Toolkit

## To animate the council

*Here are some activity ideas, they are presented briefly, but you can easily find these activities in more detail on the internet or in books on the subject. Do not hesitate to contact your territory or the Youth Councils for more information. The association's trainers can also be valuable resources for finding debate and decision-making activities. Be careful to adapt the activity to the age group.*

### FACILITATING SPEECH

#### **Talking Stick**

The person holding the stick speaks without interruption until they feel understood. This fosters better listening as others cannot respond until they hold the stick.

- + : Easy to implement; clearly identifies the speaker.
- : Challenging in large groups, risks loss of value or stick-throwing.

#### **Opinion Gestures**

Use gestures to express opinions during discussions, such as sign language applause (silent agreement) or colored cards (agreement, disagreement, or questions). Explore creativity and sign language for ideas (e.g., [seedsforchange.org.uk/handsig.pdf](https://seedsforchange.org.uk/handsig.pdf)).

- + : In a large group, suitable for all ages, allows the most timid young people to express themselves.
- : Dualist (for or against), must be supplemented by another method that leaves more room for expression.

### ***Intervention List***

The president notes speaking turns to ensure fair participation. Rules may include penalties for interruptions.

+ : Maintains order and balances participation.

- : Increases workload for the president, potentially distracting from debate participation.

### ***Round table***

Participants speak in turns.

+ : Ensures everyone contributes.

- : Limits dynamic debate due to predefined speaking order.

### ***Speaking Stones***

Each participant has a set number of stones and uses one each time they speak. Stones can be replenished after a delay. Everyone must use at least one stone.

+ : Encourages quieter participants.

- : Requires monitoring to ensure fair play.

# DEBATE

## **1+1=3**

Participants pair up to propose 3 ideas to answer the problem posed. Then you change the pairs who start again with 3 new proposals.

## **Sandbox**

Participants represent the problem in small groups using creative materials. They can then find one or more solutions by interacting directly with the construction to validate their achievement.

Example of creative materials: pawns / characters / flat balls / cardboard / modeling clay / felt-tip pens / Lego / Playmobil

## **Snowball**

The problem is presented to everyone.

Each participant makes a proposal on a post-it in order to answer the problem. The Post-Its are presented to all participants. Then, the participants will have to make new proposals to enrich or bounce back on the post-its already present as well as on the Post-Its that the participants display as they think.

## **Game of the 2 shores or Game of Affirmations**

This game is a stimulating way to approach issues. It encourages participants to think critically, listen to other people's arguments and form their own opinions.

Divide the room into two parts using a rope: one side for "yes" or "agree", the other for "no" or "disagree". Read a statement. Give the children a minute to think, then ask them to take a position. Make it clear that it is forbidden to stay in the centre: you have to choose a side. Then the discussion can begin. Participants must try to convince the other side that their position is the right one. If someone wants to change sides, he/she does so and explains why. We stop when the situation freezes.

### ***Storytelling launch***

It is possible to make a story for which you will have to find the end which will be the debate. Write a few lines on the subject that will be discussed by the council and let the young people imagine the rest through their debates.

### ***Back to the future***

You transport the question posed in 100 years and thus allow the group to imagine solutions that do not yet exist. This can be done with an imagination and enter into the framework of a "prospective" questioning.

### ***Forum theater***

Staging the problem.

Anyone who wants to enrich the story can interrupt the scene and put in their two cents. Take the time to discuss the sketch and note possible solutions.

### ***World café***

At least 3 tables are needed. Around each of them, 4 participants gather.

Phase 1: Each team answers a common question and writes their answers on the table sheet.

Phases 2 and 3: Each group designates an ambassador who stays at their table to explain the team's thinking. All the other participants spread out over the tables to listen to the thoughts of another group. After the explanation, the different newly formed teams answer the following question.

Phase 4: Joint restitution of what was said on each table.

### ***Etc.***

All the animation methods used in training or adult meetings can be adapted with young people: photo language, use of post-its, brainstorming, presence of an external speaker, launching the theme with a video, a text, rotating tables, mind maps, etc.

# CONCLUSION

## ***Rhyme in the skin***

Each group makes a verse of poetry with rhymes to conclude their reflection. We thus have a poetry of conclusions.

## ***Short message***

The 140-character constraint that everyone knows on Twitter or with text messages, here becomes the imposed framework for restitution.

## ***Team message***

Each participant suggests a sentence to form a team conclusion.

## ***Slogan***

Each proposal is written in the form of a slogan.

# DECISION

## ***Open Vote***

- + : Quick to get an idea of the group's opinion.
- : Votes are public, which may lead to participants aligning with others instead of voting independently.

## ***White or Black Ballot Vote***

Each participant has a white ball (yes) and a black ball (no) and places one into large jars (one jar per color). The fuller jar visually indicates the choice.

- + : Reduces influence from others, especially if the jars are opaque.
- : Votes are not anonymous.

## ***“Republican” Vote***

Votes are cast in a monitored voting area with booths, ensuring voters enter alone with all necessary materials. This ritual reflects civic practices in national elections, linking the process to political voting.

- + : Anonymous, allowing everyone to freely express their choice.

Various voting methods can be used. Some of the following proposals are not recommended as part of a fair and representative vote, but can be used to test different voting techniques and develop participants' critical thinking skills.

- ***Random Draw***
- ***HIPPO*** : The leader (most important, highest-paid, strongest...) decides for everyone.  
Variants: Oligarchy (elders decide); Gender-based vote (only girls/boys decide).
- ***Consensus*** : All participants must agree.

- **Majority Vote :**
  - *Simple/Relative Majority:* Proposal with the most votes wins.
  - *Absolute Majority:* Proposal must have over 50% of votes.
  - *2/3 Majority:* Proposal must secure at least two-thirds of votes, potentially over two rounds.
  
- **Consent Vote :** Participants respond with "I agree" (thumbs up), "I consent" (horizontal hand), or "I veto" (thumbs down). If vetoing, participants must explain and suggest alternatives. -> For the decision to be taken, there must be no veto and a majority of 'For' votes.
  
- **Resistance Vote:** One hand up signals reluctance; two hands indicate strong reluctance. Least resisted choice is selected.
  
- **Consultative Process:** Decision-maker seeks advice from all impacted individuals and subject matter experts before deciding.
  
- **Common Choice:** Participants grade proposals (Excellent/Good/Satisfactory/Insufficient/Reject), and the best-rated proposal is selected.
  
- **Preferential Vote:** Voters rank choices; points are assigned based on preference, and the total determines the winner.
  
- **Proportional Vote:** Proposals receive representation proportionate to their vote count.

When only two proposals exist, preferential and proportional voting lose relevance. Decide what is being voted on before choosing the voting method.

# Adult sheet

## Role :

- Facilitator of the council: Your role is to ensure the smooth running of the council without intervening in the debate. You can redirect discussions if necessary but should not give your opinion. You may, however, intervene to start the council, refocus discussions if they stray too far from the topic, or relaunch a conversation. Avoid any other intervention.
- Guide for young participants: Help them actively participate in the council. Use tools like the "Secretary's Sheet," "President's Sheet," and the toolkit to assist.

## Challenge :

Try not to think about a scarf.

...

...

If you succeeded, congratulations! If you didn't, it's normal.

Influencing someone is easy, even unintentionally. That's why it's essential to intervene as little as possible and let the young participants manage their council. Your words should remain neutral—trust the youth!

## Phrases to avoid :

- Offering examples, giving ideas, or advice.
- Sharing your opinion.
- Using expressions like "Don't you think that...?" or "Don't you believe that...?"

## Good practices to adopt:

- Plan an icebreaker session in the agenda if participants don't know each other.
- Trust young participants to lead discussions and focus on facilitating the process rather than the content.
- Allow participants to make mistakes or let the process unfold imperfectly. Avoid intervening to correct or improve a debate or activity; instead, focus on time management and maintaining the agenda.
- Take notes, complete the summary of the council if needed, and seek validation from the participants while minimizing rewording their contributions.
- Maintain your position as a facilitator.
- If participants ask for your opinion on a topic, start by clarifying that your input is personal and should not carry more weight than anyone else's.

# Practical Guides

The following two guides are memos for presidents and secretaries to help them in their roles.

## President's Guide

Le président ou la présidente est un jeune (de n'importe quelle tranche d'âge !) qui a la responsabilité de s'assurer du bon déroulé du conseil. Il doit veiller à ce que chaque participant se sente à l'aise lors du conseil et puisse s'exprimer. Il est aussi garant du respect de l'ordre du jour.

Il/Elle peut être choisi(e) en amont pour participer à l'élaboration de l'ordre du jour ou être choisi le jour même. Il peut y avoir plusieurs présidents ou présidentes, ou des vice-présidents et vice-présidentes, on veillera alors à bien répartir les rôles entre les jeunes.

## Fiche Secrétaire

Le ou la secrétaire est un(e) jeune qui doit suivre les échanges, en prendre note et pouvoir les restituer si nécessaire. Sa mission est très importante car ses notes pourront être reprises au moment des votes et pour assurer le suivi des décisions.

Pour s'assurer de rassembler le plus d'échanges possible sans stresser les jeunes, on pourra choisir plusieurs secrétaires dont les notes pourront être rassemblées.

Cette mission n'est pas réservée aux plus âgés, les fiches pratiques dans la suite du document sont à destination des jeunes et présentent des méthodes de prise de notes adaptées à chaque tranche d'âge.

# Fiche Président - Présidente

## Le rôle du président ou de la présidente

- Animer les échanges
- Distribuer la parole et favoriser la bienveillance et l'écoute dans les échanges
- Porter l'avis des membres du conseil
- Présenter les règles en début de conseil
- Veiller au respect de l'ordre du jour et gérer le temps

## Attitudes du président ou de la présidente

- Attentif : je m'assure que chacun se sente à l'aise pour prendre la parole.
- Juste : je répartie équitablement la parole entre les personnes présentes.
- Médiateur : je propose de trouver un compromis en cas de désaccord.
- Dynamique : je fais en sorte que les échanges soient riches.
- Discret : j'interviens au même titre que les autres sans monopoliser la parole.
- Organisateur : je sais clore le débat, remercier les participants et proposer la bonne méthode pour le vote.
- Soucieux : Je m'assure que le/la secrétaire arrive à suivre les échanges et lui demande de relire ses notes prises en fin de séance.

## Déroulé du conseil

Minutage	Activité
2'	Accueil et présentation des rôles
2'	Présentation des règles et de l'ordre du jour
5'	Clôture et envoi

# Fiche Secrétaire

## COMPAGNONS

Dans la démarche du Conseil des Jeunes, tu es considéré comme jeune et non comme encadrant. Ton rôle n'est donc pas de surveiller les plus petits mais de participer au même titre que n'importe quel autre jeune.

### Mon rôle :

- Écouter attentivement les échanges ;
- Noter les idées débattues, les réactions et les différents arguments proposés ;
- Compter les votes et noter le résultat ;
- Mettre en commun tes notes avec celles des autres secrétaires ;
- Restituer les échanges.

*Exemple d'organisation de prise de notes :*

- Idées proposées :
  
- Type de vote choisi :
  
- Résultat du vote :
  
- Résumé des discussions et décisions :