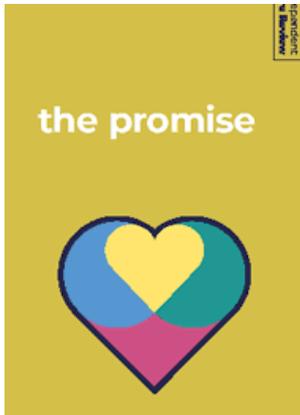


# Hearing Systems Working Group Emerging Themes Report – Easy Read version

What is this easy read about?



The Independent Care Review said that lots of things needed to happen to make things better.



One thing that needed to happen was to make the Children's Hearing System work better.



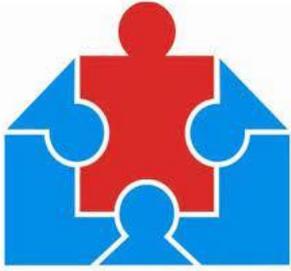
A group called the Hearing System Working Group was set up to make that happen.

The Promise Scotland are part of this group.



Children's Hearing Scotland are part of this group.





The Scottish Children Reporter's Association is part of this group.



This group has written an interim report about what it has been doing. This means another final report will be published later.



This easy read is about the important parts of that report.

## What is the Children's Hearing System?



A children's hearing is part of the legal system in Scotland.



It is where a panel of people decide what should happen to a child.



The panel members are people who get training.



They are supposed to think about what the law says.



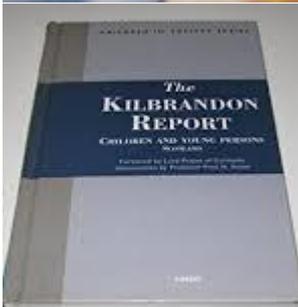
They are also supposed to think about what is best for the child. This is called their welfare.



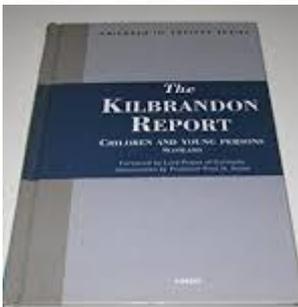
This might be because a child might have done something against the law.



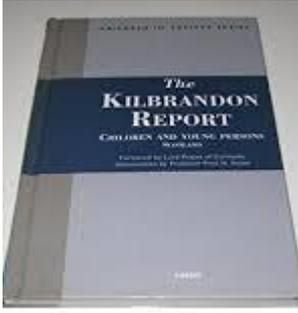
They might also be about a child needing care or protection in their life.



Our system works the way it does because of something called the Kilbrandon Report.



This is a report that came out over 50 years ago.



It is important because it changed how the legal system treated children in Scotland. It means thinking about the welfare and what is best for a child or young person.

## What are the problems?



The Promise found some people that children's hearing worked well.



There were problems as well.



A children's hearing has people on it who are a part of a panel. The panel makes decisions.



Sometimes the people that are on the panel can change and this can be difficult for children.



Sometimes it was felt that panels did not think enough about all the different parts of what was happening in the lives of the children and families.



Sometimes it was felt that panels did not really listen to what children were saying.



Sometimes it was felt that children had to miss school.



Sometimes it was felt that the way hearings worked did not understand the trauma that families felt.



Trauma is when something very distressing or upsetting happens to a person.

What is the Hearings System Working Group?



Three different organisations sit on this group.

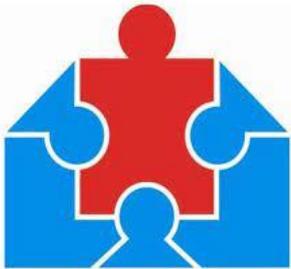


The Promise

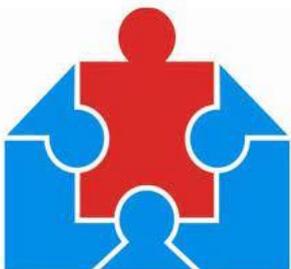
The Promise Scotland is supporting others to make the actions from the independent care review happen.



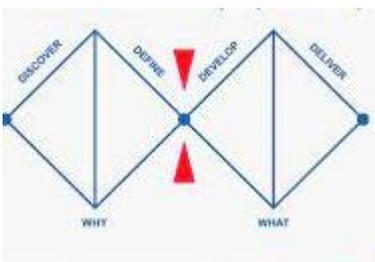
Children's Hearing Scotland recruits and trains the people that sit on the panels.



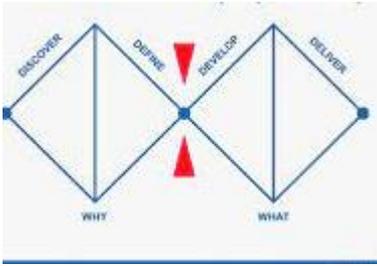
Scottish Children Reporter's Association is sometimes known as SCRA. It is the organisation that has children' reporters.



Children's Reporters make important decisions like whether a child needs to go to a hearing.



The group is working together on a redesign process.



This is a way of thinking about how to make Children's Hearings work better.



It is thinking about a vision of what a really good Children's Hearing System looks like.

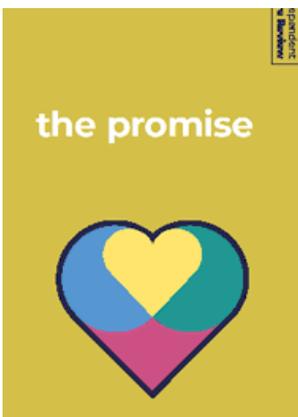


It is thinking about the changes needed. This include changing laws.



It is thinking about the types of improvements that can be made now.

How is the HSWG engaging with children, families and care experienced adults?



The group looked at a lot of evidence from the independent care review.



It is very important for the group not to ask people to talk about very difficult things like trauma again.



It has engaged with important charities like Who Cares? Scotland



They have been sharing the new ideas with Our Hearing Our Voice.

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our hearings, our voice

This is a group of young people who have had experience of children's hearings.



The group will speak to more people about their ideas early on in 2023.



How is the group doing things?

The group has met 8 times.





The group spoke to each other and to other people to come up with an issues list.



This a list of all the important questions and issues that it needs to work on.



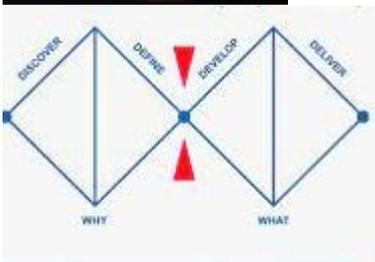
The group has commissioned research on the legal framework.



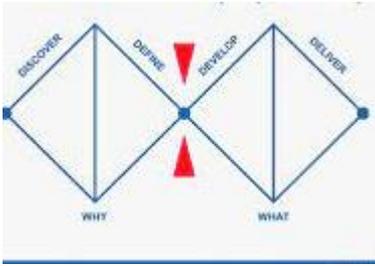
This means someone is finding out more about the different laws that matter to Children's Hearings.



The group has spoken to experts from other countries about ways to make things better.



The redesign project has had 7 meetings.



The meetings have had people who work around Children’s Hearings or have personal experience of them.



The group is working the Office of the Scottish Designer at the Scottish Government.



This is a group of people who know lots about how to use design ideas to make things work better.

## What are the emerging themes?

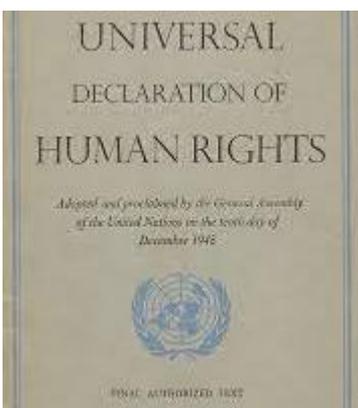


There are some emerging themes coming from the group.

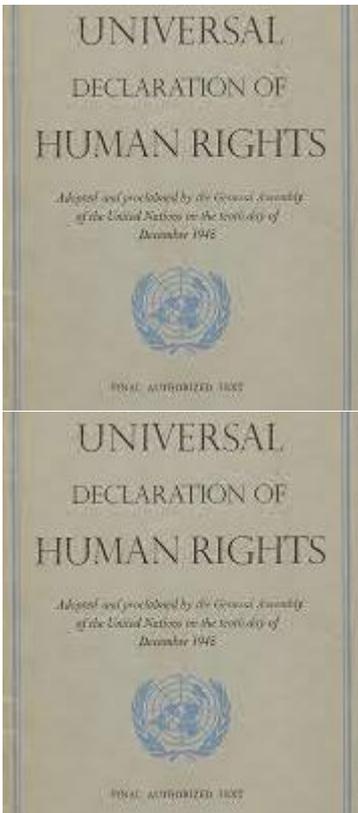


These are the types of ideas that the group is having so far.

## A rights based approach



The group thinks we must take a rights based approach.



Human rights are very important things that every human being should be able to do or have.

Human rights are protected by international laws that are sometimes called treaties.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a very important treaty about the rights for children.



The group thinks the redesign of the Children's Hearing system must fit in with the rules of the UNCRC.

## Administration



The Children Hearing's system is independent. This means it should be able to do what it thinks is best without being told what to do.



The group is thinking about what person or group best protects this independence.

## Early help and support for families



The group thinks the children's hearing system should focus on early support.

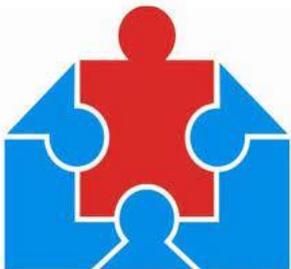


This mean helping children and families as early as possible so that things don't get more difficult for them.



This means helping everybody in the family with all the different types of help they might need.

## The role of the Reporter when a referral is made



The group is thinking about The role of the Reporter when a referral is made.



This means what happens when the reporter says a child has to go to a hearing.



The group is thinking about what types of things the reporter could do earlier. This could mean getting reports and other information.

## Family Group Decision Making



The group is thinking about Family Group Decision Making (FGDM.)



This is a way of bringing families together because they know and understand their lives best. They can then develop their own solutions to the problems that they face.



It can help people in a family to feel safer and like they have more control over what is happening.



It can make it easier to make families earlier.

## Role of Professionals



The group is thinking about the role of professionals.



Professionals are people whose jobs mean they have something to do with Children's Hearings.



These are people like Safeguarders, reporters, advocacy workers, lawyers and social workers.



Professionals being more involved has changed how hearings work.



The professionals can be very helpful for children and families.



The group thinks it is important the everyone understands what professionals should be doing and they should do it.



This will help the professionals as well as children and families.

## The best decision- making model



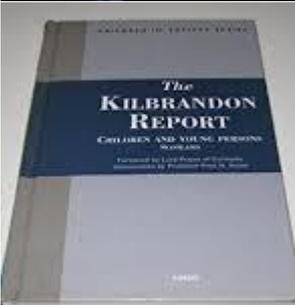
Scotland is the only country in the world that still has unpaid volunteers making these types of decisions.



This is also very different from other types of courts in Scotland.



The group is thinking about the best way of making the panels work and who should sit on them.



The group is thinking about the best way of making sure the ideas of the Kilbrandon Report work today.



The group thinks the model needs to work for children and families in all the different parts of Scotland.

# Decision- Making Process



The group is also thinking about how the panel makes decisions.



The group thinks it is important that decisions made in a clear and accessible way that children and young people can understand.

## 16 and 17 year olds



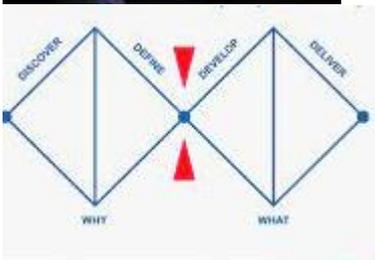
The group is thinking about a new law that might happen called the Children's Care and Justice Bill.



This could mean that more 16 and 17 year olds will become part of the Children Hearings System.



This could mean more work for the Children Hearings System.



The group thinks the redesign process needs to think about what these things mean for how the system works.

## Children's voices



The group is thinking about the hearing system can better listen to the voices of children and young people.



This must mean listening to the voices of children under 5.



This means thinking about the training and skills of the people that sit on the panels.

## The needs of Children after a panel takes place



Sometimes after a hearing there is something called a compulsory supervision order.



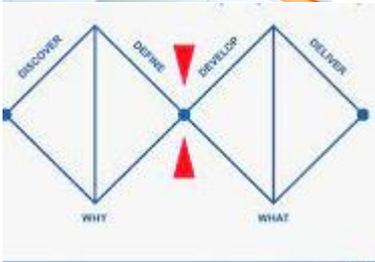
It means the local authority has to look after and help the child or young person.



The group is concerned that these orders sometimes do not happen the way they should.



There is not enough information or data to know if things are getting better for children after



The group wants the redesign project to do something about this.

Getting in touch



If you would like to know more about the process or share your views. You can email [hello@thepromise.scot](mailto:hello@thepromise.scot).