

6 WAYS EQUITAS INCREASES CHILDREN AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION *(and how you can too)*

CREATE OPPORTUNITY!

Children and youth are more capable than you might think. Our Community Action Projects are fully developed and led by children and youth, which gives them the space and opportunity to contribute in their own way to the change they hope to see in the world.

GIVE THEM THE MIC!

We encourage participation and action by supporting children and youth to share their ideas and thoughts. At the Youth Forums in Senegal, the moderator roles for the discussions were given to youth, enabling them to take leadership, as well as build their capacity and confidence.

GET TO THE POINT!

In all our work with children and youth, we use language that is inclusive, simple and straightforward, so that it is accessible and ensures that young people feel they can engage in thoughtful discussions. Our Play it Fair! program uses games to promote basic human rights values, like respect, fairness and acceptance, and to encourage discussions around children's feelings, thoughts, attitudes, behaviours and actions in relation to these values.

BE CREATIVE!

The use of art-based practices creates spaces for young people to express themselves and facilitate the co-creation of ideas and strategies with adults. One of our Speaking Rights partners, Graffiti Art Programming, uses street art to create dialogues on human rights issues in Winnipeg. This year, over 1,000 Manitobans attended a music festival they organized on the theme of gender equality and the diversity of voices in hip-hop.

GO TO THEM!

Equitas thinks that meeting children and youth in their spaces (face-to-face or online), where they feel comfortable, safe and have the confidence to share their ideas, is an important way to increase participation. Our new Speaking Rights website was created with a Youth Advisory Committee to ensure that the site reflects their needs and ideas and facilitates youth engagement.

AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES!

As part of their Equitas Community Action Project, a group of young women from La Maison d'Haiti published a toolkit on equal relationships, conjugal violence, harassment and sexual assault. The momentum of the project led to the creation of a committee with community and political leaders in Montreal to address issues of sexual violence and gender inequality in schools. Since, the project and committee have had significant media coverage and community support.