



OUR VOICES COUNT!

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT IS TRANSFORMATIVE WHEN WE DO IT TOGETHER

WHY DOES YOUTH ENGAGEMENT MATTER?

Young people have **energy, creativity**
and a **desire to change things**



In the Americas there are more than **162 million persons** between the ages of 15 and 29.



This represents **25% of the region's population**.

Engagement teaches you:

Teamwork

How to communicate your ideas

How to organize activities

How to solve challenges

Engagement strengthens the community and enables us to exercise our rights and citizenship responsibilities



DEMOCRACY IS BUILT THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

To engage means to vote, to put forward proposals in the student council or to represent ourselves in youth parliaments, but there are also other ways of engaging and they all matter:

State your views and join in debates at school

Participate in environmental projects.

Stand up for everyone's rights.

Express yourself through art.

Participate in sports – they are a means of enjoying life together and organizing ourselves

Use networks to share ideas and promote causes.

Involve yourself in decision-making and democratic processes at school, in the community or nationally.

All this is also democracy!

FORMS OF PARTICIPATION THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

According to **Hart's ladder (1992)** these are the experiences that really make your voices count:

LEVEL 8

Projects where, right from the start, decision-making is shared between young people and adults.

LEVEL 7

A project is proposed and managed by young people and the adults only provide support if they are asked to do so.

LEVEL 6

The adults launch the initiative but make decisions together with the young people.

The goal is to create spaces where youth input is listened to, considered and shared with the community.

SCHOOL, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: THE PLATFORMS FOR ENGAGEMENT

Youth engagement begins in the most familiar, everyday places.

SCHOOL



Voice opinions with respect.



Resolve conflicts peacefully.



Listen to different points of view.



Make decisions together.

FAMILY



Discuss values and rights.



Practice empathy and solidarity.



Share daily decision-making.



Develop the confidence to contribute in other spaces.

COMMUNITY



Identify challenges and propose solutions.



Connect across the different generations.



Participate in collective projects (environmental, cultural, social).



Strengthen your sense of belonging and responsibility.

TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEMOCRACY

In the Americas, **86% of the population** uses the Internet as a source of information and a platform for communication.

Today, youth engagement also takes place in the digital world.

Disseminate your ideas through your networks

Join in campaigns

Mobilize collective action

Express yourself creatively

Build citizenship online

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Publish a meme with a social message or create a video for a specific cause:
this is also a way to engage!

OAS Interamerican Democratic Charter Corner

Article 16

Education is key to strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the development of human potential, and alleviating poverty and fostering greater understanding among our peoples.

PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL!

In the Americas, **millions of young people engage every day**: they share ideas, they create art, they are social influencers within their networks and they create new expressions of citizenship.

Youth does not wait for the future...it is creating it right now in the present!

What can YOU do?



Get involved at school, exchange ideas respectfully



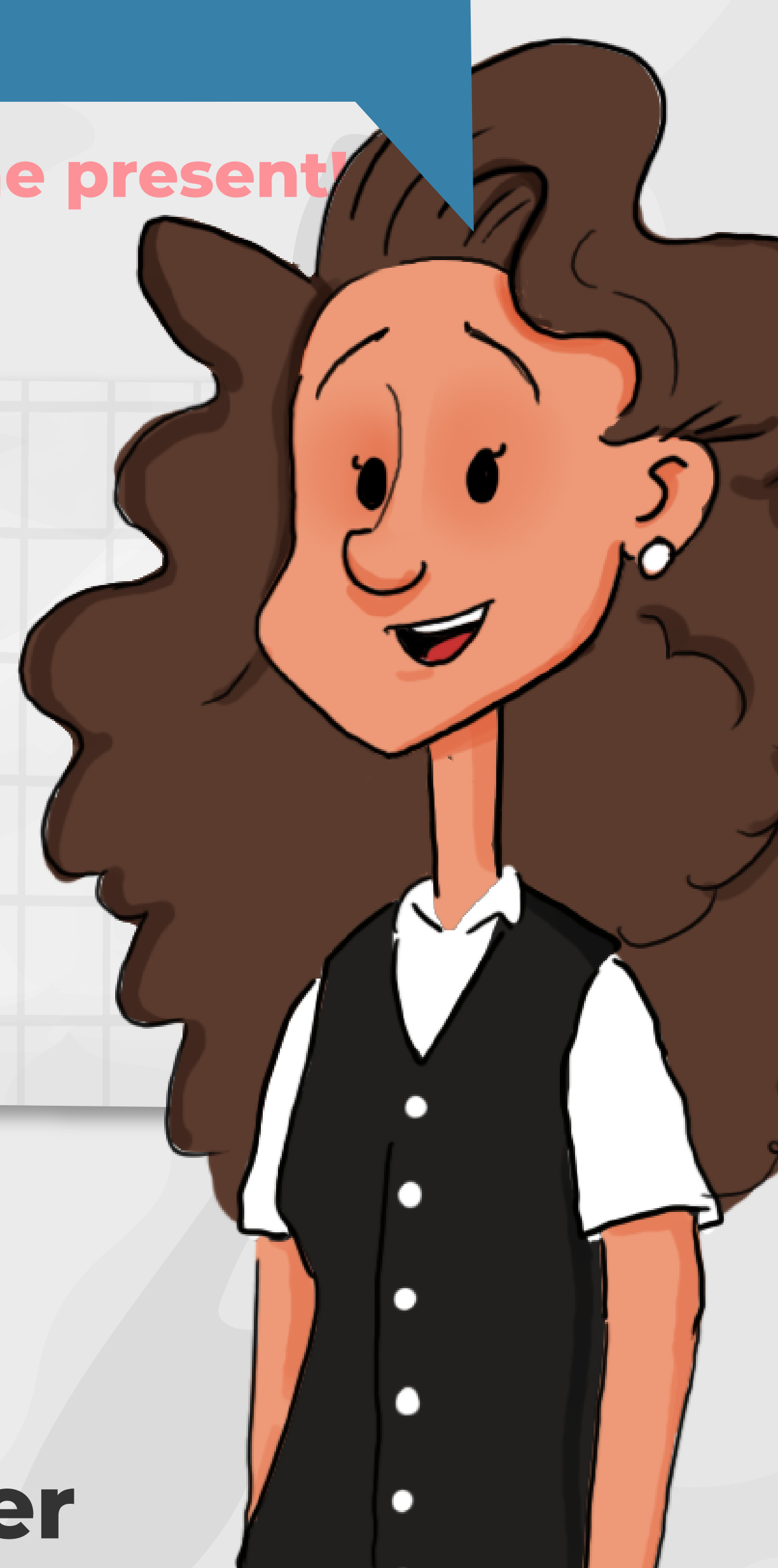
Look for spaces where young people's voices will be heard



Identify with causes that matter



Join collectives, councils or groups



**Engagement is more than just talk.
It means proposing, building and acting together
in the community.**