

Children must be included

ANSO THOM

CHILDREN'S participation in decisions that affect them is essential for improved service delivery, the latest South African Child Gauge 2010/2011 has revealed.

Released in Cape Town last night, the annual review by the University of Cape Town's Children's Institute puts children's political rights under the spotlight and explores ways in which listening to children can also help strengthen democracy and children's development.

The Gauge makes the point that children's right to participation is protected by law and adults have a responsibility to include children in decisions that affect them.

The law also says that professionals like nurses, doctors, social workers and teachers must include children in decisions about their lives.

"The benefits of this approach should outweigh the accompanying challenges for stressed service providers," said Minette Coetzee, professor of child nursing at the University of Cape Town. – Health-e News Service