

THANKS!

WE HEARD YOU



THE CYPSP REGIONAL
SUB GROUP ON BLACK AND
MINORITY ETHNIC CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE



WE HEARD YOU...

Lots of organisations have agreed to meet together to plan services for children and young people in Northern Ireland. This includes agencies in charge of health, housing, education, supporting families, keeping people safe and lots of other things.



The job of our group is to look at how we can make things better for children and young people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. That means children and young people whose parents are Travellers, or who might be of a different race from people here, or whose parents have come to live here from another country.

We made a plan about how we can work together to make things better for BME children and young people. We wanted to know what you thought and many of you got together and talked about the plan.

We asked how we could make sure that you are healthy; get a good education; live in a good environment and have enough money to live on; know and understand your rights; are able to have a say about decisions and can do things to help society; are safe and feel you belong here.

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You told us about lots of things that you liked but you also told us that some things weren't good and should change.

WE HAVE LISTENED TO YOUR SUGGESTIONS.

There are some things that we don't have the power to change (like building more hospitals or colleges) but we will give your messages to the people who do have the power. There are some things we are already doing and some things that the Government are already doing - we will tell you about those. There are some things that we plan to do in the future, you will find out about those things here.



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HEALTH

You told us that you knew a lot about how to keep healthy. You also told us about things that aren't good like having to change in front of other children for sports at school and being left out or bullied. You don't like it when doctors explain things to your parents but not to you. You worry that your parents don't have enough money if they are not allowed to work.

You want us to make sure you have somewhere private to change in school, that there are more activities - and not just in main towns. You also want us to make sure that doctors talk to you to explain why you are sick.

What we are doing / will do in future:

- We will look at programmes that work well in other places in helping children and young people have good mental health and feeling good about themselves.
- We will test out local programmes that help children and young people to feel proud of their culture and to get involved in activities.



- We will make sure that children and young people know they have a right to ask for an interpreter.
- We will make sure that children and young people know what services are on offer.
- We will make sure that people who offer services to children and young people know about working with people from different cultures - and maybe come from different cultures themselves.



EDUCATION

You told us that there are lots of things you love about school, learning and after schools activities and sports - you want more of all that. You also told us that language can be a problem for you and your parents - when you start school, in class, in letters home and at parent-teacher meetings. You said some teachers don't seem to understand different religions and cultures and some schools don't have the right food available. You thought it would be good to study more about different religions and cultures and to meet more with children from different backgrounds - to get to know them. You also felt that your parents needed help with English and understanding how the school system works.

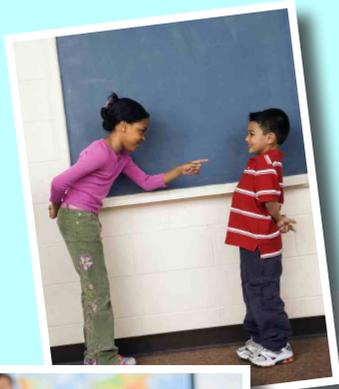
You want us to make sure that when people are training to become teachers they learn more about different religions and cultures. You want schools to communicate with your parents in their own language, to provide interpreters and help them understand the school system. You want schools to teach about all the different cultures and religions. You want to get more help in school, especially with English and you'd like to see more homework clubs, after school activities and sports.



What we are doing / will do in future:

- We help teachers to support children and young people from different backgrounds.
- We provide interpreters for parent-teacher meetings and translated letters for parents.
- We help classroom assistants to support children and young people from different backgrounds.
- We provide support programmes across the Southern area of Northern Ireland to help you and your family with school, especially your move from P7 to secondary school
- We will make sure that people who are training to be teachers learn more about working with children and young people from different cultures and about the rights of BME children and young people.
- We will find ways to involve your parents in learning about how schools work.
- We will find ways to make sure that BME children and young people are able to join out-of-schools activities like sports clubs, youth clubs and fun ways of learning.





FEELING SAFE AND BELONGING

You told us that your family and friends help you to feel safe and that some neighbours are friendly and helpful. But some of you don't feel safe on the streets, in pubs, restaurants and parks, or when playing outside. You said that you are often bullied and get racist abuse.

You want us to make sure that people are educated about racism and how wrong it is. You also want to see more police patrols and more police from BME backgrounds - although some of you said you wouldn't go to the police for help. You want more integrated schools and more time exploring cultures in school, to break down barriers - and more organisations like BELONG that teach you how to be safe.



What we are doing / will do in future:

- We provide programmes to support you in exploring your own culture and thinking about what 'belonging' means when children and families around you have a different culture to yours. (BELONG)
- We will work with other organisations to fight hate crime and bullying against BME children and young people in schools and communities.
- We will make sure we give special support to BME children and young people who might have to leave their families because there is violence in the home - and we will work with families to make family life safe.
- We will provide resources and training to schools and youth workers to help them tackle racial bullying and to support you if you are being bullied. (BELONG)
- We will help you and your parents if you are being bullied or even if you just feel you don't belong.



LIVING IN A GOOD ENVIRONMENT WITH ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ON

You told us that there are good things about where you live, like being close to relations and having lots of shops. Some of you told us that your houses are too small and some are in a bad condition and in a run-down area. You said that unemployment is a problem.

You want us to make sure that there are more jobs for adults and that people can work fewer hours and get better pay. You also want to see people having better working conditions - free meals and heating, and more days off to spend with their families. You also want there to be more nurseries, schools, colleges and hospitals.



What we are doing / will do in future:

- We provide a range of programmes in the Craigavon area to help BME young people aged 14-20 with education, integration and jobs.
- We will work with housing organisations to help BME families to get good places to live that are safe and have enough room.
- We will make sure that BME families know about and can get the help they have a right to.
- We will work with other organisations that help BME parents to get jobs.

HAVING A SAY ABOUT DECISIONS AND HELPING SOCIETY



You told us that there were things in your community that you could get involved in like Polish and Lithuanian clubs, the BELONG programme, sports and other activities. It was also good to go to the local Mosque. Some of you told us that the local newspaper did a feature on BME children and that was good. But many of you said that media reports of BME people, and what is happening in the countries they come from, is very negative. You said that people judge you because of how you look or where you are from.

You want us to make sure that you get information about activities you can do and get more opportunities to mix with other children - so you can get to know each other. You also want school exchanges so that you can meet other children from your own country. You would like to see more good stories about other communities in the media.



What we are doing / will do in future:

- We help you to learn about and understand your rights to have a say and to participate in decisions that affect you. (BELONG)
- We work with decision makers to find ways for BME children and young people and their families to have a say in decision making. (BELONG)
- We will find ways of helping children and young people to get involved in activities about their own culture and help them to feel confident about being themselves and joining in with others.
- We will provide leadership training for BME children and young people and their families.
- We will work with local newspapers, television and radio to encourage them to be positive about BME children and young people.

KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING RIGHTS



You told us that it was good that so many people told you about your rights - the BELONG programme, teachers, family, Government and Councils. You liked the fact that schools respected your religious beliefs and traditions and supported you to practice them. You also told us about problems you have with things like people judging you or not being allowed to dress according to your religion or not having somewhere to pray - and that sometimes you are treated unfairly.

You told us to make sure that you get the same respect in school as other children and that teachers understand that language barriers and cultural differences make it harder to understand some things. Muslim girls want to be able to wear trousers or long skirts to school and be able to see a female doctor. You want to see more Mosques - not just in Belfast and Derry.

What we are doing / will do in future:

- We make sure you are involved in decisions that affect you and that you know enough about your rights to help you to do that. (BELONG)
- We will provide training on rights for staff who work with children and young people.
- We will find out how good organisations are at working with people from different cultures and we will support them in improving in this work.
- We will make sure that everyone involved in planning services for children has training on rights, treating everyone fairly and different cultures.
- We will make sure that all organisations have up-to-date information about the number of BME children and young people here and the numbers who are getting our help.





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children & young people

Participation Network

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