

The **Children's** Service  
in **Haringey**

We want every child in Haringey  
to be happy, healthy and safe  
with a bright future

# Safer Solutions

youngpeople'sconference



# Why a conference?



## Why a Conference?

Haringey Children's Service and Haringey Community Police Consultative Group (HCPCG) jointly organised this conference to learn young people's views on tackling issues of safety. Focusing on 'Staying Safe', one of the key outcome areas of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, the objectives of the day were to find solutions to ten priority issues that had been brought to our attention at previous events for young people. These were:

- bullying;
- anti-social behaviour;
- relations with the police;
- victims of crime;
- drugs and alcohol;
- harassment – homophobic;
- harassment – disability;
- harassment – racial and religious;
- harassment – sexual;
- violence in the home.

The day was planned to create active involvement, reflecting Haringey's commitment to the participation of children and young people in decision



## Who attended



making. The day was led by young people, including the opening and closing speeches and the warm up by Leaders In Training. The morning and afternoon workshops were facilitated by young people who also managed the electronic voting system. The Youth Service and Connexions were instrumental in driving much of the work. This report brings together the young people's responses and proposed solutions to the key issues of safety that were discussed at the conference.

## Who attended?

The conference brought together over 100 young people from across the borough of Haringey.

There were students from our eleven secondary schools, special schools and the Pupil Support Centre. Young people also came from our youth centres, children's homes, and the Metropolitan Black Police Association Leadership Programme.

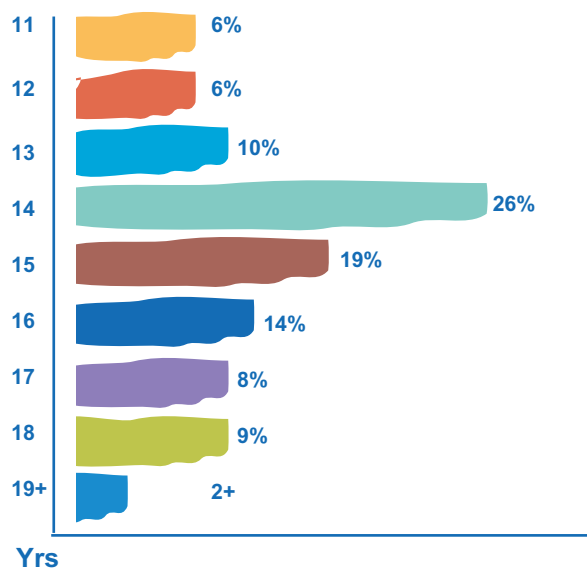
# Participation Workshops



## Are you male or female?



## How old are you?



## Participation Workshops

During the morning young people attended workshops where they discussed the rights and responsibilities of children and young people. These had a strong focus on the UNCRC (United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). The young people were given an opportunity to discuss and identify how the UNCRC affects participation.

The sessions, run by the Youth Service and Children's Fund Participation Project, allowed the children and young people to debate statements that were based on the UNCRC. These helped the young people to gain knowledge and empowered them to discuss children's rights confidently.

The 'Participation' workshops helped to develop a shared understanding of young people's experiences. Through discussion in small groups, they were able to identify potential solutions that could be incorporated into schools and the wider community.

Many solutions were discussed and displayed. Among the 100 young people who attended the workshops, the three most popular solutions were:

- assemblies led by children and young people
- ballot boxes at reception areas
- participation rooms.



# Safety workshops

A special 'Participation' workshop ran in the afternoon for adult guests. This workshop was led and facilitated by young people from the Connexions North London Young People's Partnership Board (YPPB).

The workshop followed the same structure as the earlier sessions but with the children and young people allowing adult guests to consider the solutions proposed at the morning sessions.

## Safety workshops

The afternoon workshops were designed for young people to share their ideas on how to improve and tackle a number of different issues of safety. Trained facilitators guided discussions on each of ten subject areas. The young people then had the opportunity to contribute and suggest potential solutions to the problems. The groups had to agree on their top three solutions. These were presented to the larger group who voted to indicate their preference.

Hosted by the YPPB, all the young people had the opportunity to vote

electronically on the top solutions proposed by each workshop. The voting proved to be a lively and interactive session, providing the Children's Service with some very useful information.

The results are shown on the following pages.

### Bullying



In this workshop, mentoring for the bully was viewed as the most popular solution to tackle bullying. As the quote below states

*"The bully can go to a mentor and tell them why they bully and they can take them to a drama session where the bully is being bullied so they think twice before they bully again – so that they will know how it feels."*



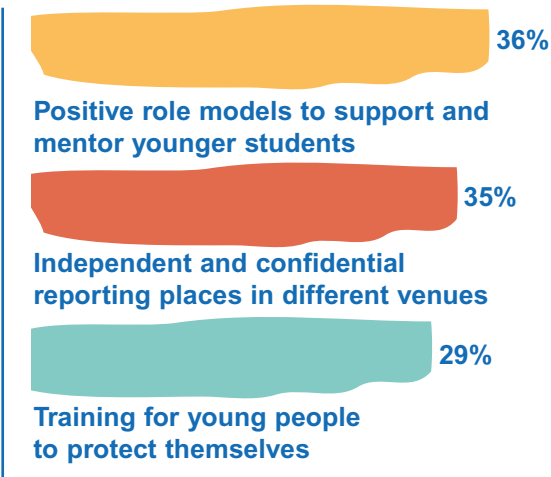
The young people in this workshop felt that teachers did not have a full understanding of how bullying affected young people and that they were often fobbed off without the matter being properly investigated. They said that people who are bullied stop coming to school and are afraid to report the bullies.

They suggested that teachers should be trained on how to deal with bullying. They also said that older children in the school and teachers should act as mentors for younger children who have

been the victims of bullying. Some of the young people were aware of their school's bullying policy but did not feel that it was effective, as teachers were not adequately trained to deal with bullies and did not know how to support the person being bullied.



### Anti-social behaviour



During this workshop, the young people debated and discussed different types of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and made a distinction between environmental crime and ASB. They also discussed the effects that different types of ASB had on people, for example they decided that racial harassment would have a direct effect on an individual, whereas graffiti although unpleasant did not have the same impact. However they all said that if they lived in a block of flats covered in graffiti they would feel embarrassed to bring their friends home.

The problem with litter in the borough was discussed. They all agreed it was a

big problem and suggested that people should be fined for throwing rubbish and litter in the street. One of the young people said that those who dropped litter should be made to pick up litter for a day as a punishment.

The group came to the conclusion that BULLYING was the main form of ASB that affected young people. Suggestions to help those being bullied included setting up centres where young people could go to get advice, help and training on how to deal with bullying.

### Crime-relations with the police



Within this workshop it became apparent that a lot of young people felt slightly threatened by the police and their presence. A number of young people

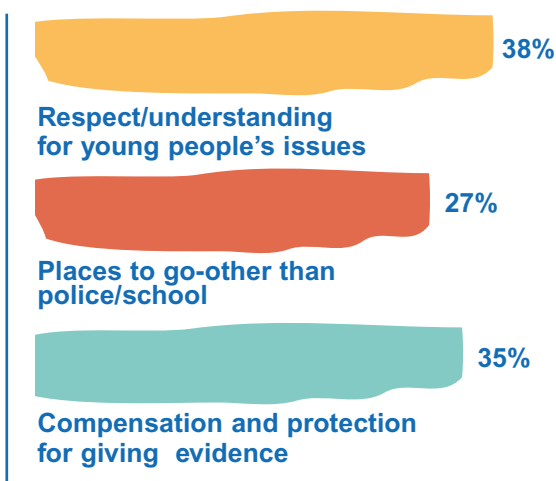




reported their past experiences with the police and the effect this had on how they viewed and stereotyped the police today.

The young people agreed that one of the best ways to challenge stereotypes and to build relationships was to bring the two groups together - young people and the police in one forum. This could be through activities such as football games or workshops where they had the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns.

### Crime-victims of crime



Within this workshop, some of the young people said that they did not have

confidence in the response of the police to reported crime. They also felt that they would be scared of giving evidence in court for fear of reprisals. In relation to the street robbery of IPODs, mobiles, etc the young people wanted to know why they should bother to report it.

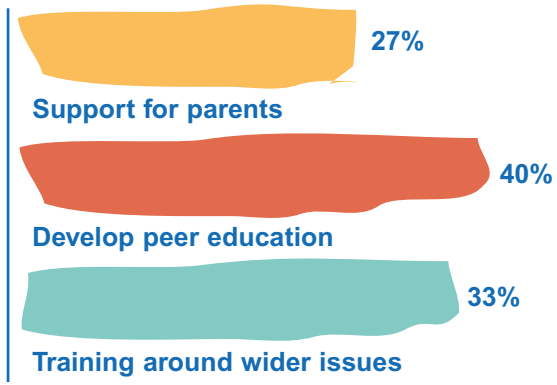
There was challenging discussion around the very topical issue of cultural warfare, particularly amongst Turkish speaking and Black young people. Several participants said that they felt the police would not be told and that issues were more likely to be dealt with by involving older siblings.

Young people from the west of borough also felt vulnerable and scared when going to other parts of the borough where they thought more resources existed.

In addition to the three solutions prioritised by the group, it was suggested that there should be more anonymous reporting options available for young people.



## Drugs and Alcohol



Within this workshop it was felt that young people would find it difficult to be completely open about personal drug problems with an adult in a school setting and a teacher in the room.

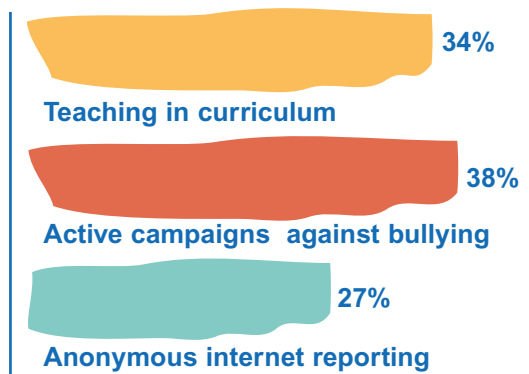
Drugs education lessons, young people said, were excellent for knowledge, exploring attitudes, harm minimisation and role plays which synthesise drug situations.

However, a number of the group felt that their parents were out of touch with the problems which young people encounter in our society and it was suggested that it would be a good idea to set up parent groups to develop drug awareness.

Another strong point to emerge was that drug education should be included in

other areas of the curriculum, besides PSHE and not treated as an isolated subject.

## Harassment - Homophobic



This workshop started off with an exercise where the young people had to pick out the 'gay' people from a number of photographs. The entire group were surprised when they were told that in actual fact all the people in the pictures were gay. When asked why they had chosen who they had, they stated it was because of how they were dressed, the style of their hair etc. This led on to an articulate and thought provoking discussion about assumptions and stereotypes.



Young people suggested that if you were gay, you might be scared to talk about your feelings for fear of bullying and that sometimes it is not nice to feel different.

The young people acknowledged that the wider school community didn't necessarily hold their views but felt that much more work needed to be done to raise awareness of homophobia with teachers and fellow students.

#### Harassment - race and religious



This workshop came up with a number of solutions and ways to tackle racial and religious harassment and had difficulty prioritising their top three. Their other solutions included:

- establishing buddy groups
- befriending someone who is isolated
- offering support/advice to other young people
- positively challenging friends about discriminatory behaviour
- using Sixth formers as peer mentors
- allocating a Sixth former to each tutor group
- creating a safe place within the school
- a secondary school counsellor who would deal with perpetrators in similar ways to which bullying is dealt with in primary schools. The counsellor should be publicised and should have a designated room
- getting to the source of young people's discriminatory behaviour
- more workshops to encourage young people to confide in other young people or mentors



### Harassment - sexual



### Harassment - disability



This workshop covered a wide range of issues including gender stereotypes, dress, language and definitions of sexual harassment. People presented different scenarios and had a general discussion about harassment in society and then focused on schools.

The group looked at the spectrum of harassment from name calling and sexual suggestion through to unwanted physical contact and assault. Several girls in the group thought that low level sexual harassment was commonplace in schools and that a better culture of respect, and action to combat harassment was needed, particularly in relation to girls.

The top three solutions agreed related mainly to the school environment but could be applied more widely.

Raising young people's awareness was seen as vital in tackling disability harassment. The group suggested that this could be done through adverts, citizenship lessons, talking to and learning from those who have experience of disability and workshops on disability.

Including and welcoming those with disabilities into mainstream schools was also seen as crucial, as it was recognised that prejudice occurs when people are unfamiliar with those who may appear to be different.

Help and support was seen as a good way to tackle some of the issues around disability harassment. The group proposed that young people with disabilities could be supported through peer support and mentoring, a buddy





system and peer mediators. The group also agreed that all young people should learn to communicate through a different means, for example sign language, to better include those with a disability. The ethos of a local primary school was used to illustrate good practice.

### Violence in the home



This workshop asked young people to think about domestic violence and what we understand when we talk about violence in the home. The young people stated that the husband, wife or other family members could carry it out. It happened in some teen relationships and could take place on the street or in the supermarket.

When asked to describe domestic violence, young people described it as being about power and control, which involved sexual violence, emotional tension, financial manipulation or isolation.

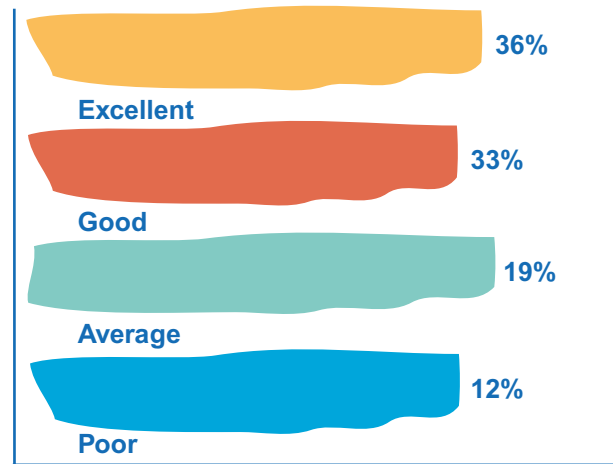
Proposals to on how to tackle domestic violence included: reporting it and speaking out about it to break the silence; using support agencies; campaigning and taking part in activities at schools to raise awareness.

It was suggested that if a friend confided to you that they had seen domestic violence at home then they should be reassured that they are not alone and it was not their fault. Unfortunately there are many children and young people who have similar experiences. They should be encouraged to speak to an adult whom they trust so that they do not have to deal with it on their own.

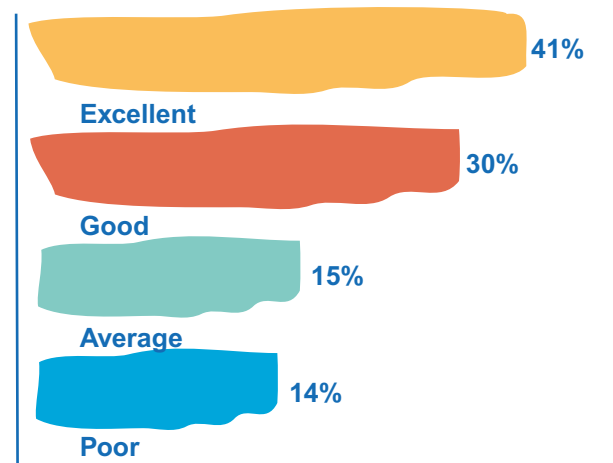


# Conference evaluation

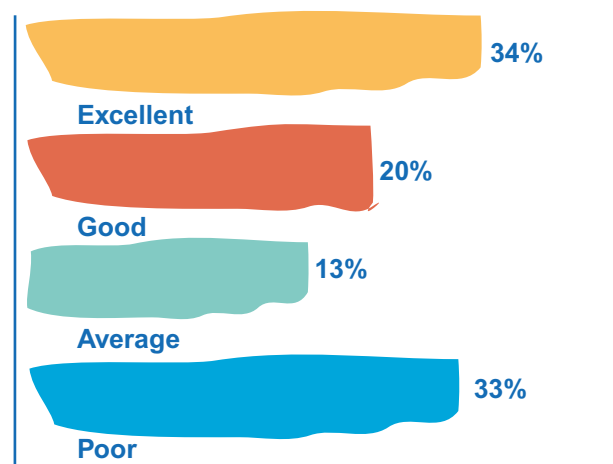
How would you rate your learning today?



What did you think of the morning workshop?



What did you think of the afternoon workshops?



# What happens now?



## What happens now ?

All the information that was collected on the day will be sent to Councillors and the people who can start doing something about all the things that have been mentioned. Haringey Children's Service will take responsibility for informing its partnership organisations of the results. These will include other directorates in the Council, such as Environmental and Recreation Services; external partners, including the Police; the Primary Care Trust, which is part of Health Services and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, which will report back to young people on what has

been done.

The solutions suggested have informed Haringey's Children and Young People Plan for 2006-2009. This Plan sets the council's priorities for improving children and young people's lives over the next three years. By listening to what young people have said, we hope that we are closer to setting the right priorities.

If you would like a copy of the Plan or further information, please email [cypplan0609@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:cypplan0609@haringey.gov.uk)

We understand that we can only make things better for you if we listen to what you have to say.



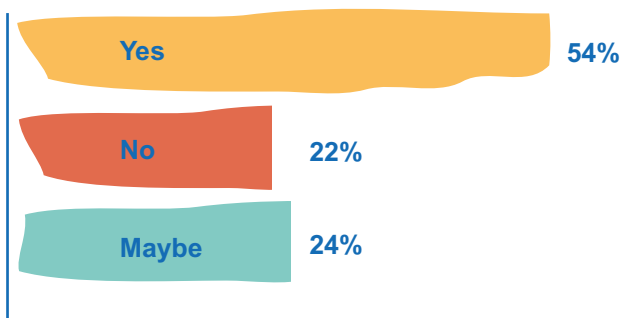
# Next steps

## Next Steps

Young people's attitudes towards the day were very positive and have reinforced Haringey's commitment to involve and provide more opportunities for children

and young people to take part in the decision making process. The responses below reflect the mechanisms which will be used to do this.

**Would you be interested in joining a Haringey youth forum which meets monthly to discuss issues for young people?**

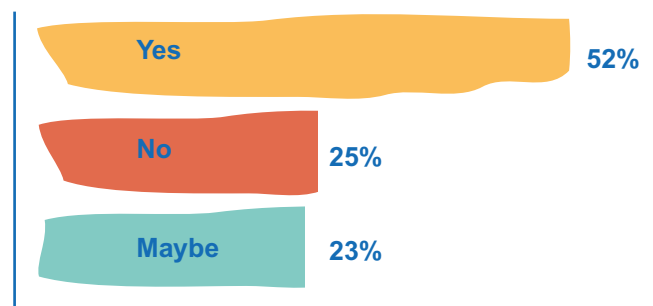


### Watch this space....

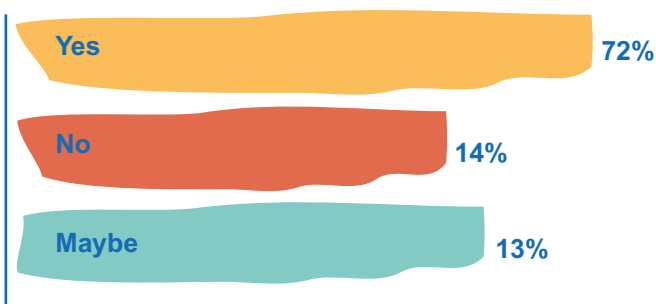
During 2006, Haringey Children's Service is looking to develop a young people's council which will allow young people's issues to be discussed

Haringey Youth Service is currently looking at ways to design a young people's website where you can access information 24/7 about things that are happening in the borough

**Would you use a Haringey young people's website/**



**Would you like to attend more events like this?**



We will make sure we hold events that can bring young people together regularly and we will work to ensure that young people are involved in the planning and organisation of the events



For your



Notes



Haringey Youth Council will monitor what happens next. If you would like more information, please contact [Mike.Davis@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Davis@haringey.gov.uk)