

loudspeaker



Young NCB members magazine | Issue 7 | March 2004

ISSN 1475-6129



don't miss your chance to speak out on issues that interest, annoy or puzzle you on the ever-expanding your shout!

the ncb voice

4K for the 10K

Our 30 glorious runners in the 10K British road race London have raised well over £4,000 for Young NCB – which is fantastic news!

The hard slog over Westminster Bridge, past St Paul's Cathedral and into Parliament Square in 30 degree heat amongst thousands of other sun-crazed athletes was the easy part! The collection of the sponsorship money they were promised was the tricky bit! But they've all done it now, and we have a brilliant amount to show for it. The prize for most money raised goes to Adrian Coles for raising a whopping £351! Well done Ady. We hope you enjoy the prize.

On behalf of all Young NCB members, we'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who ran and to everyone who generously sponsored our runners. The money will of course be put to good use – continuing to give children and young people the chance to speak out and have their say.

youngncb.org.uk goes live

Young NCB's brand spanking new website is up and running, and, if I do say so myself, looking pretty good too! It's full of news, stories, polls and *Your Shouts!* It's easier to use and more fun, exciting and interactive than ever before!

The new look was thought up by some of you lot – way back in February 2003, when you got together to decide how we could make some changes for the better. And this is the result. You'll now get the chance to see familiar faces in the photo galleries, vote on whatever takes your fancy, find out what Young NCB members have been up to and what's coming up ... and plenty more. Don't believe us? See for yourself at www.youngncb.org.uk. You can even let us know what you think by having Your Vote!

Hi there!

If you've phoned the Young NCB offices, or even been there recently, you might have noticed that there's been a few changes taking place ... Rachel has taken a break for a few months while she has a baby and Shuna found it just a bit too cold in England this winter, so she has gone to travel in South America. The participation team at NCB will be working with Young NCB while Rachel is away. That's Lucy, Ben and myself, Hannah.

This issue of *Loudspeaker* is a Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover Special! If you haven't already heard, Young NCB organised their own fantastic conference in October. The aim was to challenge negative perceptions and judgements that are made about young people. Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover was attended by over 100 young people, politicians, press and television stars! It was a packed day, with loads of exciting stuff going on, that I'm sure we'll all remember for a long time. The planning team worked really hard to make it a very special day, so a big thank you to everyone who was involved. There are lots of comments, reports and pictures from the day on pages 4 to 9 of this issue of *Loudspeaker*.

Lots of other things have been going on at Young NCB. Some Young NCB members have been working hard on the research project about smacking – It's Time for Us to be Heard. Look out for the next edition of *Loudspeaker* to see what they found. You can also check out the progress of the project

on the new Young NCB website.

The Young NCB advisory group recently undertook the difficult job of electing two new Young NCB representatives for NCB's board of management. After much debate and deliberation Hannah Gibney and Eamonn Wilkinson were voted in. They join Jack and Louise in representing Young NCB at NCB's board meetings. Congratulations and good luck to you both! Turn to page 3 to see what they have to say about their new jobs.

Lots of Young NCBers and other young people recently took part in a consultation to find out what young people think about health services for their parents, older people, young children and themselves – and, as always, they had lots of ideas! Page 12 tells you all about what they said.

Young NCB members who took part in Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover have written lots for this issue of *Loudspeaker*. A big thanks to everyone who contributed. If you have anything that you'd like to report on, news of something in your area, music or film reviews, or anything else you would like to see in *Loudspeaker*, then please e-mail info@youngncb.org.uk or phone 020 7843 6099.

I hope you enjoy this issue and all the great pictures from Don't Judge.

Hannah Olle
Young NCB Coordinator



Young NCB is the free membership network for all children and young people run by NCB.

As a member of Young NCB, you have the chance to speak out on the issues you feel most strongly about such as safety, sex and relationships, schools and education, bullying, drugs and the media.

At Young NCB your views really count and will be heard by other children and young people, professionals and policy makers.

For more information and a free joining pack visit www.youngncb.org.uk, e-mail info@youngncb.org.uk or call 020 7843 6099/67



advisory group

your bbc, your say

all on board

At the last Young NCB advisory group meeting the members undertook the important task of picking two new Young NCB representatives to join the already experienced ones – Jack and Louise – on NCB’s board of management.

After careful deliberation the advisory group chose Hannah and Eamonn, and we are pleased to say that they both accepted. We asked Hannah and Eamonn how they feel about becoming Young NCB representatives.

‘I’m really excited and the first board meeting was really interesting, but I am a bit nervous!’ said Hannah. ‘I’m looking forward to having a say in what happens in NCB, it’s really cool that there is a youth voice on the adult board because I think that it’s

important that as a children’s charity they have that available.’

‘Becoming a Young NCB board rep gives me and other young people a place to voice our views, opinions and ideas,’ explained Eamonn, ‘and also come up with ways of turning those views and opinions into reality ... I really hope that in time as representatives in NCB, Hannah and I can show other people that this is what we do.’

And finally ...

‘I think that this is a fantastic opportunity for me and I think the next year is going to be loads of fun!’ said Hannah.

Look out for an update on what happens in the next issue of *Loudspeaker*.

the agm and 40 years of ncb!

On 27 November members of the Young NCB advisory group attended the NCB board meeting and Annual General Meeting (AGM). Here Hannah Gibney tells us about the day.

The day started off with the board meeting, where Eamonn and I were introduced as the new Young NCB representatives. The majority of the debate in the meeting was about *Every Child Matters*, a government consultation document that aims to improve the life chances of all children and young people. It was good to be able to see the inside workings of NCB.

Lunch was served after the board meeting finished. There was a huge cake that was cut to celebrate 40 years of NCB, and after everyone was

full to the brim people began to take their seats for the AGM. Young NCB had a 20-minute slot to fill. Jack and I told everyone about the past year in Young NCB, what we’re planning and the things that we hope will happen in the future. As usual, Jack was witty and brought laughter to the whole thing. Rachel helped by telling everyone about some of the other Young NCB events that none of us were involved in. It was really good fun, and a brilliant experience to talk to adults about all the great things that Young NCB does, has done and will do.

The day was so fantastic and I want to say a huge thank you to Rachel and Shuna, who have both left now. They helped us loads to prepare for the meetings. I hope Young NCB will continue to be as brilliant and fun in the next year!

Ever watched TV or listened to the radio and thought it would be so much better if...? Well now’s your chance to have a say. The Government is currently reviewing what the BBC does. They want to know what you think is good and bad about the BBC.

Want more programmes on your favourite type of music? Think the BBC ignores what goes on in your area? Then take a look at this website:

www.bbccharterreview.org.uk/youngpeoples_version.html

It gives you lots of questions to start you thinking, but you can comment on anything the BBC does – TV, radio, the internet, or even things the BBC sells, like DVDs, magazines and toys. Just e-mail your views to:

bbccharterreview@culture.gsi.gov.uk

write a letter to:

BBC Charter Review Consultation
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2–4 Cockspur Street, London
SW1Y 5DH

or call 020 7211 6418.

Your comments will be posted on the website – if you don’t want them to appear, please say in your letter or e-mail.





don't judge a bo

celebrity appearances

Josie D'Arby is usually seen on our TV screens as PC Jodie Finn in *Merseybeat* or presenting CBBC or *Top of the Pops*, but she took time out of a busy filming schedule to come to *Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover*.

Everyone listened as she talked about how important it is to challenge negative stereotypes of young people: 'Adults often have negative perceptions of young people and groups of young people have ideas about each other. Everyone is different – everyone has different clothes, hobbies, music tastes and ideas, and today sends out a really important message to politicians, the media, police and other young people about not judging people straight away.'

'I'm really pleased to be part of such an innovative and exciting day,' she said, 'and I hope there are more events like this to come as there will always be stereotypes of young people out there, but hopefully people like you can make a difference.'

The young people and adults at *Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover* were all also lucky to have Lyrickal – a human beat box rapper – come and perform for them.

He rapped about the judgements that adults make about young people – making all the words up as he went along and using no drums, keyboards or computers! Not content with performing during the morning, Lyrickal also rapped in the dinner hall at lunchtime, entertaining the delegates while they ate their sandwiches.

Everyone loved his positive messages about challenging negative stereotypes and what it feels like to be judged.

What's the fuss about?

On 23 October 2003, over 100 children and young people came together from all over England to share experiences and ideas about how to challenge negative perceptions of children and young people.

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover was jam-packed with workshops, performances, a panel discussion and special guests. It was a day for young people run by young people ... a true example of how you can do something positive, empowering and proactive!

Why?

2003 was NCB's 40th Anniversary and Young NCB members were asked to contribute to the celebrations. So a year ago advisory group members decided they wanted to look at challenging negative perceptions of young people (from adults, people in authority, the media and from other young people).

The aim of the day was not just for people to talk about how they're judged or perceived, but also to share practical ideas, tips and experiences of trying to challenge these negative perceptions. The idea was that everyone could learn from each other and would go back to their own communities, schools and youth groups to put what they learned into practice.

What?

The main focus of the day was the five workshops led by young people from all around the country who have already done a lot of successful and positive work to challenge negative perceptions. The workshops were led by young people from Refugee Youth, WhizzKidz, Shape, CityZen and Cambridgeshire Youth Day.



There was loads of other stuff too: a drama presentation from Young NCB members; performances by rapper and human beat box Lyrickal, young people from Kori Cultural Arts Club and 14-year-old singer Amara Isaac. The very smiley Jose d'Arby came along to show her support for the event and Young NCB.

Solutions ... getting answers!

At the end of the day participants got the chance to put questions to members of a panel.

The participants had no shortage of topics they wanted to ask about, ranging from the Anti-social Behaviour Bill to young refugees and asylum seekers.

Famous!

Don't Judge attracted loads of media attention. Two members of the planning group appeared on BBC Breakfast and two on BBC Radio 4. Other Young NCB members were on Newsround and BBC News. Stars in the making!





ok by its cover

it's all in the planning

Hi, my name is Irene and I was a member of the planning group for Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover. Being part of this team was a very enjoyable and useful experience because I ended up having a bunch of close friends and I learned many new skills. Now I can prioritise and I have better time management skills. I also learned how to communicate with important people, which not many young people get the chance to do!

We decided to organise this event as a combination of NCB's 40th Anniversary and as a celebration of the achievements of young people. We chose the theme of challenging negative perceptions of young people because this is a topic that many young people feel passionate about.

A lot of us are judged on our personal or social characteristics, such as culture, race, religion or disability. We think that young people should be recognised as individuals and not just as one group.

It is true that some of us should be ashamed of ourselves, but the majority of young people have high hopes for a great future and want to go far! We thought that this theme would give us the chance to confront adults and other young people publicly and to challenge negative perceptions – and we were right.

I found that I benefited from the event because I faced the difficulties of being a disabled person for the first time. I had always been afraid of becoming friends with disabled people because I was never sure of what to say and how to say it. However, the Whizzkidz workshop completely changed my views and it encouraged me to speak to disabled people more openly without being afraid of saying the wrong things.

The night before the event the planning group had a sleep over where the final decisions were made. We painted the décor ourselves and made arrangements for the media coverage of the event. Everyone was so excited that we didn't get much sleep.

When we finally saw everything coming together in the morning it was the best feeling in the world; especially when guests started arriving and everything seemed to be going well! Organising and running this event was an incredible achievement for us.

'Well, we hope the people who came enjoyed it cos, you know, it was really hard work,' said Louise, a planning group member.

However, this is not the end! It's just the beginning of a series of workshops and events which will tackle the issues concerning the ordinary young person! We are planning to keep in touch with the workshop groups and continue to change the world for the better!



the planners

A team of 10 Young NCB members gave up loads of weekends over the last year to plan and deliver the event.

They did everything, from drawing up the programme and deciding who to invite, to choosing the logo and making the banner. On the day itself they could be seen all over the place with their brightly coloured Young NCB t-shirts, hosting the day, chairing the panel discussion, directing people and making everyone feel welcome. Young NCB's very own Young Facilitators and Young Support Workers facilitated workshops and were around to help too.

your shout!

What did people like most about the day?

Everyone was friendly

I liked everything

When Lyrickal sang on the stage and in the dinner hall!

The music

Meeting new people and learning about their views

The refugee event

Watching television in the Cambridgeshire thingy

The CityZen workshop

You got to say what's on your mind

Your voices got heard!!!

Music and poems by young people

Josie D'Arby!



don't judge a book

refugee youth

Can you imagine arriving somewhere where you don't know anyone, don't speak the language, can't understand the road signs and aren't even sure which country you're in?

Sound scary? Well, this was the experience that members of Refugee Youth described to young people in their workshop.

Refugee Youth is a group of young refugees who meet together to share their experiences and try to challenge some of the negative perceptions of young refugees.

Two members of Refugee Youth led a really good workshop about the negative stereotypes of young refugees and how it makes them feel. They talked about the experiences of young people who arrive in this country as refugees with their parents, having no choice in what happens to them because they have had to leave their home with their parents. They asked everyone to imagine what it would feel like to have arrived in a foreign country, away from their friends, family, everything they know ... and then face prejudice and see negative perceptions of refugees.

These were some of the things that participants thought the refugees would feel or experience:

- can't speak the language
- don't understand any road signs
- having to eat different food
- not being in their own home
- feeling stressed and in a state of shock
- not understanding lessons at school
- prejudice from other pupils at school
- seeing negative images and stories in the media about refugees
- missing their friends and other family from home.

focus on whizzkidz

One of the workshops at Don't Judge focused on prejudice and discrimination towards disabled children and young people. It was run by young people from Whizzkidz. Irene Karapetyan tells us all about it.

The workshop was led by Bianca, a disabled young person. She began by discussing the barriers between those without any disabilities and disabled people. She also spoke of her disability, the problems it causes and about being judged by teachers, students and, surprisingly, by other disabled people.

Most of the teachers, as she said, patronised disabled children in their classes. They would explain a task to the whole class and then would individually explain it to the disabled children to make sure they understand. They also give disabled students more time to complete homework or finish tests and class work. Bianca mentioned that often teachers can't look a disabled person in the eyes and will talk to them without making eye contact.

Students who are not disabled are afraid of approaching disabled students because they don't want to offend them by saying something wrong. Also some students are afraid of being judged by other students if they become friends with a disabled kid ... so instead they stay away or make fun of the disabled kid. Bianca told us a story about her friend who is in a wheelchair and cannot speak or use complex sign language. Therefore, when she says 'NO' she simply pushes the person speaking to her so that they will leave her alone. Some of the kids in school used to irritate the girl and when she would say 'NO' by pushing them they would complain to the teacher and she would get in trouble.

Bianca also spoke about how disabled people are prejudged against those who have less disability or are able to do certain things that they can't. She mentioned how some wheelchair users dislike disabled children who can walk. Disabled children's clubs tend to state whether the club is for wheelchair users, blind people and so on. This clearly shows division between disabled children.

Then Bianca suggested how to break all these barriers. She told us that most people are afraid of approaching disabled people because they don't want to offend them in any way and that this was their big mistake. Bianca would rather speak freely about her disability and raise awareness at school of what is actually 'wrong' with her.

She said that the reason why many teachers judged her upon her disability is because they were unaware of how to deal with disabled children. Therefore, Whizzkidz is working towards encouraging the Government to provide specialised training for school staff about disability and some basic use of sign language. Another project it is undertaking is to encourage everybody to take part in Disability Awareness Day, to find out more about disabled people and how to deal with disability.

At the end of the workshop Bianca taught the participants some basic sign language and thanked everyone for supporting her.





Book by its cover

cambridgeshire youth

It's not only Young NCB members who are concerned about negative perceptions of young people – Cambridgeshire Youth is a group who, like Young NCB, wants to challenge stereotypes of young people. Young people from Cambridgeshire Youth have been working on promoting the image of young people within local communities. They came to Don't Judge to show delegates what they've been up to and how other young people can challenge stereotypes in their own area.

Cambridgeshire Youth played a video of what they had been doing. They talked about different ways of dealing with local newspapers and how people in local communities perceive young people. These are some of the things they said:

- people often have false impressions of young people
- shopkeepers accuse young people of stealing or don't trust young people
- young people are seen as 'causing a nuisance' when they are really just bored and have nothing to do so are hanging around
- young people talk behind other young people's backs and make judgements about them based on what they are wearing.

The group said that one of the best things that young people in local communities can do is to challenge negative perceptions and foster positive attitudes. Using the media – especially the local press – is a really good way to do this.

'It was really good because it added to our day, and that was our topic,' said Louise, a planning group member.

shape

Ever read something in a newspaper and got annoyed by what it said about young people? Or seen a TV programme that showed young people as bad as or even worse than criminals and thought this is unfair? Yes? Well Shape's young media representatives have decided to try and do something about it.

Shape aims to make people think again about young people and crime. It wants to see young people shown fairly on TV and not all labelled as criminals in the newspapers.

Shape's young media representatives have undergone media awareness training and they respond to things that are said in the media as well as writing their own reports.

The young people from Shape used all their knowledge and experience to lead a workshop on negative stereotypes of young people in the media and how to challenge them. It was a really lively workshop that everyone enjoyed.

your shout!

We wanted participants to share experiences and ideas and to learn from each other. So what did people take away with them from the day?

Everyone has their rights, to say what's on their mind

Don't judge someone by their looks

If I have something to say, say it!

How important participation is

To think how others will perceive your actions

Young people are capable of helping, organising, helping each other

How young people can become active participants in their community

The idea of getting involved at home

Different is good not bad

Take away ideas, different works and voluntary work

Take back to Cornwall the richness of the day

Different things I can do in my area

There is lots of hard work going on

Don't judge a book by its cover! It's wrong!

kori cultural arts group

The Kori Cultural Arts Group amazed everyone at Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover with their poetry.

They passionately performed the poetry they had written about what it feels like to be judged unfairly. Amara Issac, a very talented member of the group, also sang beautifully during the afternoon session.

Kori Cultural Arts Group uses music and art to express their feelings about things that affect their lives.

odiri

At Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover, Odiri performed poetry about what it feels like to be judged.

Odiri is a storyteller, dancer and poet from Nigeria. She writes her own stories and uses others from around the world to show how similar people are from all over the world.

She works with groups of children and young people to inspire them to write their own poetry and to express themselves using stories, dance and music. Lots of participants at Don't Judge were lucky enough to be able to attend one of her workshops.



don't judge a book by its cover

panel discussion

Equipped with fresh ideas from the workshops, the participants at Don't Judge came back together for a panel discussion chaired by a planning group member.

There wasn't enough time to put everyone's question to the panel, but here are the questions and answers that we did have time for.

What do you think about the Anti-social Behaviour Bill?

'It is an infringement of human rights and it won't solve anything. Anti-social behaviour happens everywhere and is not just to do with young people.'

Celia Duncan, Cosmogirl!

'The Anti-social Behaviour Bill brands young people as yobs and the Government is swayed by the tabloid press – young people's image is being tarnished by a minority.'

Charles Hendry, shadow minister for young people

'The Bill is reactionary and might make things worse in the short term.'

Elsbeth Howe, member of the House of Lords

What can be done to challenge negative stereotypes of young people?

'Get involved, write to MPs, use different channels to get your views heard.'

Deidre Forbes, The Voice

'Join a group – young people have a bigger voice with others. Buy newspapers, and write to them – papers respond to their readers.'

Celia Duncan, Cosmogirl!

'Join the UK Youth Parliament and be involved in youth groups – like Young NCB! Young people have views and are interested.'

Ashley Sweetland, Young NCB member

'Become involved in volunteering schemes within local communities – and give the local press good news stories.'

Ian Jenkins, Superintendent from the Metropolitan Police

What can be done about the representation of refugees and other excluded groups?

'The way newspapers present asylum seekers has got out of hand, the public needs educating, because they are people in genuine need.'

Deidre Forbes, The Voice

'Young people can get involved in organisations like Star that encourages consultation of excluded groups and Young NCB that promotes participation.'

Ashley Sweetland, Young NCB member

Being judged by other young people

I believe we are judged by other young people maybe because of the way we look, age, sex or race or the way you speak

It makes me feel ashamed of myself

Lonely and depressed, scared, undermined, vulnerable, upset and angry at being judged so easily

Effects my self-confidence, causes peer pressure, makes me feel I have to conform

It might make them feel as if they weren't wanted or were worthless in every way

Who else judges?

Social workers
Rich people
Parents
Relatives
Male drivers
Nightclubs
Bus-drivers
Other people's parents
People in museums
TV
Mates
Business people
Politicians
Boyfriends
Older teenagers
Youth leaders
Youth workers

COMMENTS

**Who judges?
What judgements do they make?
How does it make you feel?**

These questions were posed to participants at Don't Judge. Here are some of the answers they wrote on the Comments Wall.

Teachers

We feel small because they tell you what to do and who to hang out with. Like you have no say in what affect to your own life – not in control

Overall we feel isolated, angry

Make us feel stupid

Police

Because we are young, they think we don't know much about our rights so they try taking advantage. Once you do something wrong they don't leave you, they start victimising you

I feel discriminated, hurt and angry

Shopkeepers

Shopkeepers automatically assume that if you are in a group with your friends then you are untrustworthy and are likely to shoplift. This makes me feel uncomfortable, not trusted or respected

Family

We feel like we are outcasts even though they are our own family

Doctors and nurses

Angry, humiliated, upset



Don't Judge a Book by its Cover

Don't Judge a Book by its Cover

Newspapers

Newspapers pick up on the bad points that we have done and never give good points on us.

Local newspapers pick up on the good points

Demonise and categorise young people. Don't celebrate achievements

Elderly people

Automatically assume that because you are young you are a thug

Patronised

That maybe you should be as they expect you to be

Like you have to prove that you are not like they think

When teenagers are in a large group they seem to think we are going to do something and they see us as a large threat

Snobs

Put you into different categories

It makes me feel aggravated because a group of people shouldn't be able to make you feel that way. You know deep inside that you're just as special or as gifted as them

Strangers

People sometimes make me feel ashamed

Guilty, angry

Feelings at being judged

Unwanted
Sad
Upset
Self-aware
Angry
Left-out
frustrated
I think being judged makes you feel lonely and it makes you feel different from other people
Bad for being 'sidelined'

Solutions

Get to know young people as individuals
Treat young people as equal citizens
Challenge perceptions and recognise problems
Foster positive attitudes

Stars in the making

Don't Judge a Book By Its Cover was not just a storming success for those who attended – it also achieved an avalanche of media coverage and made TV and radio stars out of several Young NCB members!

Alberta Bunbury and Zara Grossett were interviewed for the Sadie Nine show on BBC London Live radio the night before the conference. They talked about whether teenagers are misrepresented, and also discussed the work that went into setting up the conference.

Irene Karapetian and Jack Sharp appeared on BBC Breakfast at 7.45 on the morning of the conference, for a live interview about young people and stereotypes. This meant they had to be whisked across London in a car specially laid on by the BBC at 6.30 in the morning! They had to go into make-up before appearing on screen – which Jack seemed less than impressed with. But the interview went brilliantly and Irene even got to hold her Young NCB t-shirt up to the camera!

At the conference BBC London interviewed Laureene Ndjire, who explained why the Young NCB members had organised the event and what they hoped to achieve.

Also present was a TV crew from BBC Newsround, as well as reporters from the Independent Radio Network (which supplies bulletins to local stations like Capital and Kiss 100), and Radio 4's The World Tonight programme. They interviewed a number of young people attending the conference about the Anti-social Behaviour Bill.

What happens after don't judge?

The work hasn't stopped here. The Young NCB advisory group took a little breather, but were then back to the grindstone planning what to do next.

Having been so successful at attracting press and television coverage for Don't Judge, the Young NCB advisory group decided that Young NCB should be more involved in the media. We hope there'll be many other opportunities for Young NCB members to speak to the media in 2004.

The NCB media office are going to hold a training course to show the Don't Judge planning group and the advisory group how the media works, how they can give the perfect interview and how they can write for a newspaper or magazine. So soon Young NCB members will be able to respond to issues in the media that are bugging them – and especially about young people being judged.

Once they're fully trained up, our 'Young NCB media representatives' should be able to pass on their training to other Young NCB members later in the year – look out for details in future issues of *Loudspeaker*.

SEX and r u thinking eno

celebrating the work of ypic

Did you know that over the past two years the YPIC (Young People's Involvement and Consultation) project has worked with over 400 young people from around the country!

Some of these young people formed the Young People's forum and went on to:

- make a video on accessing sexual health services
- attend meetings of the Teenage Pregnancy Unit Independent Advisory Group
- work with young mothers and fathers to make a video on issues for teenage parents
- attend a consultation day with senior Government officers to tell them what health education they need at age 16 and over
- attend a residential weekend in the Peak District
- develop a conference with Young NCB called Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover
- co-chair the Sexual Health – Get Active! conference with Cathy Hamlyn at the Mermaid Theatre in July 2003
- redevelop the R U Thinking? website.

Well done to everyone involved, but there is still lots more to be done. I am leaving NCB to start a new job, so for information about future YPIC activities please contact Joanne Butcher. I have really loved working with all of you and will miss you very much.

Jeanie Lynch
YPIC Project Development Officer

R U Thinking? is a campaign providing information for young people on sex, relationships and contraception. Its slogan is: 'Sex, are you thinking about it enough?' and there is a free, confidential helpline called Sexwise as well as a brand new website (www.ruthinking.co.uk).

Through a range of media, the campaign helps young people make informed choices about sex and relationships so that they can prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies. Research shows that over 75 per cent of teenage pregnancies are not intended and a worrying one in nine people has had an STI.

The main messages of the campaign are about having sex only when you are ready. There is a lot of pressure around relationships but we tell people that it is their choice when to have sex – and no one else's. Because no matter what your mates say, most people are at least 16 before they first have sex, and later sex is often greater sex.

For those who are sexually active the advice is to always use contraception to prevent pregnancy, and that only condoms will help protect against STIs. Many young people don't realise that they can get free, confidential advice about contraception whatever their age – even if they are under 16. There are lots of local services available and www.ruthinking.co.uk or Sexwise on 0800 28 29 30 provides a simple way to get advice and find things like free condoms, emergency contraception, pregnancy tests and STI treatment in your area. People with hearing impairments can textphone 0800 328 1651.

The R U Thinking? campaign has been running for three years and is funded by the Teenage Pregnancy Unit, which works across government on issues related to teenage pregnancy and sexual health.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone at NCB who has helped with R U Thinking? and to all the fantastic young people who helped us redevelop the new www.ruthinking.co.uk website.

Garth Davis
Department of Health



ed stuff!

ugh about sex?

We came to London to help to redevelop the ruthinking? website. It was great to be asked, as some of us had never been to London before. We thought it would be a good experience and we might meet some other young people our own age from different parts of the country.

We really enjoyed putting together different parts of the website and finding out if other young people had the same views as us. We have understood a great deal more of issues around culture, teenage pregnancy, communication, working as a team and not judging other young people. We achieved completing the website, making friends, seeing London and its sights, knowledge, experience and understanding that young people should be respected regardless of their beliefs, religion, colour, sexuality or disability.

The first day was quite hard work. We had to put together links for different categories on the web pages. We were also distracted by the lovely weather through the big windows! The second day was more fun and we worked

hard but had a good laugh and got to know each other more too.

We think it is important to help others so they know where to go for info, advice and guidance. This is important to us because it is a website made by young people for young people, ensuring that they are correctly understood.

Most importantly, we felt listened to and that we helped to make a difference for other young people. The new website is amazing, and it is great to think that we helped to make that happen.

Zoe, Vikki, Debbie and Sue, BelleVue Project, Hartlepool

what a great experience!

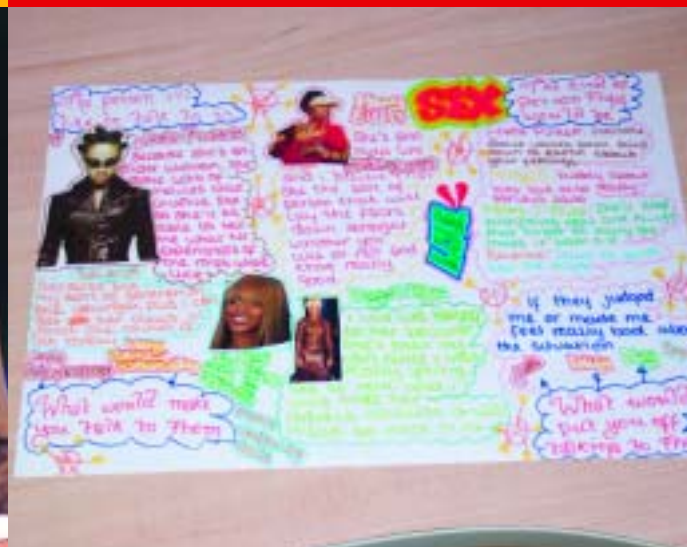
In August this year I co-chaired a conference called Get Active. Young people and adults were invited to hear from groups of young people who were actively involved in projects to improve the sexual health services for young people in their area.

The conference was a great opportunity for young people from across the country to come together, share and learn from each other's experiences. And that's exactly what happened. Young people who are enthusiastic about improving sexual health services (including myself!) came together and learned about what was already out there and also how they could help in their own areas.

As a member of Young NCB I co-chaired the conference with another young person called Eugene, as well as Cathy Hamlyn from the Teenage Pregnancy Unit. The day ran smoothly and it was great chairing it. During the day we learned from each other and were also entertained, so it was action packed. It was such a privilege to help facilitate a wonderful event at which a lot of new ideas and inspiring experiences were shared.

The overall and long term aim of the conference was to improve young people's sexual health services. With such enthusiastic and passionate young people on the case as well as adults that are willing to listen – like the ones at the conference – and dedicated health care professionals, I'm certain the aims will be reached and many young people will directly benefit. I hope more conferences will take place like Get Active, and I would definitely like to be involved in future events because differences are being made!

Emma Tolley



member news

young people speak out about healthcare

Have you ever thought much about your healthcare and what you would like to change about it? Lots of Young NCB members and other young people did when they took part in a national consultation for the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE).

One hundred and ninety-eight young people, aged of 5 to 19, took part in workshops all over the country. They told researchers from NCB what being healthy means to them, how they would like to improve healthcare for all ages, and how they would make health services more cost effective.

Young people said that children, teenagers, adults and older people should all have the right to equal treatment. It shouldn't matter if you cannot pay for treatment or if you live in a remote part of the country – everyone should have equal access to treatment if they need it. However most groups of young people realised that this was not always possible because there is not always enough money and sometimes difficult decisions have to be made.

Young people thought that when decisions are made about who should be treated, each case should be treated individually. Age, a person's health and lifestyle should be thought about when decisions are made.

Young people also said that prevention is better than cure – it saves money in the longer term!

Many young people drew pictures of what they think a healthy person looks like – here is one, how do you compare??



Here are some of the things young people said:

'You can't just look at age [when making decisions about treatment] you have to look at everything, such as their fitness and lifestyle.'
Participant, Outer London.

'Everyone has a right to the same treatment regardless of age.'
Participant, Cumbria.

'There shouldn't be a difference between cities and rural areas but all should be offered the same options.'
Participant, Derbyshire

'All age groups should get the same respect.'
Participant, Hartlepool

'If you want value for money, you should go for something that affects the whole population.'
Participant, Cumbria.

member profile...



Alberta Bunbary went on a mission to find out all about what makes longstanding Young NCBer

Jack Sharp tick ... and found out all about Armenian rock music ...

Alberta: *How did you get into Young NCB?*

Jack: Originally a letter was sent to my school addressed to me. I have no idea how they got my name. Maybe because I was on the school council, but I was the only one in the school to get one. It was inviting me to a conference, and I went. That was four years ago. Since then I've been to hundreds of conferences and talks. The ones I like best are on health, teenage pregnancy and that. And making videos is always good. Of course, the Don't Judge conference was really good too. The Annual General Meeting is always good, it gives me a chance to make speeches.

What's your general interests?

Most racket sports. I play tennis for Coventry, play badminton frequently, and like table tennis. I've been playing the drums for three years. I like watching rugby but I don't play it anymore, and I like playing on computers.

Favourite music?

System of a Down. It's Armenian rock music.

What are you studying?

At the moment I'm doing GCSEs in Maths and all the Sciences, Music, Art, English, Graphic Products, German, History and Statistics.

Wow! that's serious. Then what do you plan to do?

Plan to stay on at the school to go to Sixth Form there and study English and History A levels. Not sure of the third one, but I wanna do Critical Thinking AS.

Critical Thinking – that's really good! What, is that like debates and stuff? Yeah.

What about after that? For a career? No idea!

What are your likes and dislikes? Let's start with food. What's your worst food?

Tomatoes. Can't stand tomatoes. Except on pizza and in sauces.

Favourite food?

Fajitas – which are like tortillas and you add slices of chicken and sauce and peppers and stuff. And I love Singapore fried noodles. They're the best kind of noodles. You've gotta try 'em.

What do you hate about people?

What they do, say or how they act?
I hate it when people ... I dunno ... try to be funny when they're not.

And what do you admire in people?

I admire it when they can stand up and talk in front of other people – especially when they've never done it before. I like people who can mingle and be friendly ... and people with confidence.

Who do you admire most?

I don't really have a role model. I admire lots of people for what they do.

Who's your favourite actor?

Jack Nicholson. He's been in The Shining, About Schmidt - tonnes of stuff.

How about actress?

Um ... Halle Berry. (He laughs!)

What's your philosophy in life?

I could say something really cheesy here but ... 'Don't try too hard cos there's always someone better than you.'

Oh come on, how about something positive?

OK, 'Try hard 'cos you can be the best!' Cheesy but true!