

## young ncb in brussels

also in this issue: meeting the police (page 6) - more from the horses' mouths (page 3)



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

## do you believe or don't you?

The other day Mel Nodder (age 15) asked her friend Rose McCaughey (age 16), 'Do you believe in God?' They started to have a discussion about it, and this is what they said ...

In school we discuss God a lot, and have different talks in our religious education lessons. The teacher shows us videos about what they found out about Jesus, for example about the sheet that had his image imprinted on it. It proved to be a fake when an age test was done on it. When evidence like that comes up, it just doesn't add up. When you look at scientific proof, we evolved from monkeys. And we learnt about the Big Bang in science.

There were 140 gospels written around the time of Jesus but only four got picked to go in the Bible: Mark, Luke, John and Matthew. Again this doesn't add up.

Stories from the Bible, like when Jesus fed 5,000 people at the Sea of Galilee with five loaves of bread and two fish, are quite hard to believe. We were told by our teacher that stories like these aren't necessarily true, but it just sets a moral story. We think it is good to live by these morals, but some of the stories are a bit silly.

We do think there was someone in those times who performed miracles to make people feel happier about themselves, but he was not the son of God. Other religions have different old scriptures telling stories such as these, which we don't really believe to be the truth but they do guide people's morals.

We believe in God, but not as taught in school. We think that your individual God is there to look out for you and guide you. We might pray to God if something sad or really good has happened, like when my cousin had a baby or when we found out my aunty was ill.

There are so many different cultures which believe in their own God, and we think this is good because nobody has to follow what one culture does. Most people want to believe in God and we think that everyone is entitled to believe what they want, but they don't need to follow what other people tell them or what they are taught is the truth.



## Hello everyone!

**I've been re-reading the editorials from the last few issues of *Loudspeaker*, and have decided that working at Young NCB is better than any soap opera. There are stories of staff disappearing off to China, young members winning awards, tales of mystery and adventure ...**

The plot thickens in this issue, as Rachel has taken a break to have a baby to keep her daughter Martha company. I've taken over from Rachel for a while, which I'm very excited about – I'm the person on the left in the picture above. We have a new member of staff – Adriana Byrne works with Young NCB part-time so hopefully you will get to meet her soon!

Lots of you have been in touch to say that you've been busy with exams and school tests. Now you can take a well-deserved break and put your feet up with the new issue of *Loudspeaker*.

Some of our members have been doing more than concentrating on

their school work over the last few months though ...

On page 5 Nathan tells you all about Daisy and his trip to Brussels, where they met with members of the European Parliament.

You can find out about the recent Young NCB talkshop where our members got to talk to the Metropolitan Police on page 6.

And discover just what Emily made of speaking in front of 200 people at a conference about the youth Green Paper on page 7.

We're always looking for stories, poems, articles or drawings for future issues of *Loudspeaker*. So if you'd like to see your name in print, just drop me an email at [info@youngncb.org.uk](mailto:info@youngncb.org.uk), text me on 07734 581685 or give me a ring on 020 7843 6067.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and that you all have a fantastic summer.

**Lucy Morris**  
Young NCB Coordinator



## advisory group

# from the horses' mouths

Last issue we shed some light on those shady people who hold the power in Young NCB. Here we put faces to the names of the other six advisory group members and give you the low down on them.



**Nathan Poole** (15) is from Fleetwood in Lancashire. He wants to help Young NCB develop into a group that everyone's talking about, and recently took part in the 10k run. Nathan also travelled to Brussels with

Daisy (another Young NCB member) to meet with members of the European Parliament earlier this year (read more about this on page 5). In his spare time he likes to chill with mates. Nathan admires Margaret Thatcher and his philosophy in life is just to be yourself.



**Lauren Graham** (17) is a new advisory group member who lives in Weston-Super-Mare. Lauren heard about Young NCB through Weston Youth Council, and likes eccentric people who have a

good sense of humour. She admires John Peel, and likes going to gigs, dancing and singing. She joined the advisory group because she wanted to change people's perspectives on the potential of young people.



**Idris Olasupo** (15) is a new advisory group member who lives in East London. Idris recently spoke at a conference about the youth Green Paper (you can read about it on page 7) and believes

that Young NCB is really helping people. In his spare time he plays football, goes to the gym, goes clubbing and does coursework. He admires people that you can trust and believe in.



**Amani Omar** (13) is our youngest advisory group member. She found out about Young NCB through a teacher at school, and she liked what she heard so she decided to join. In her spare time, Amani likes

to go swimming, watches TV, does her homework and thinks about what needs doing at Young NCB! Amani's philosophy in life is to always try her best.



**Natasha Fiberesima** (13) joined Young NCB through our website ([www.youngncb.org.uk](http://www.youngncb.org.uk)). She lives in Stockport and joined the advisory group because she wanted to make a difference. In her spare

time she likes to dance, play basketball and talk to friends on MSN messenger. She likes nice, friendly people best and thinks that snobbiness is a big no-no.



**Hannah Gibney** (17) has been involved with Young NCB for several years. She likes honest, friendly people with integrity and looks up to Martin Luther King, David Lammey MP and all of the staff at NCB.

In her spare time, Hannah works with other charities and hangs out with her boyfriend. She wants to make Young NCB more widely known and to encourage more young members to be part of the advisory group.

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](http://www.youngncb.org.uk), email: [info@youngncb.org.uk](mailto:info@youngncb.org.uk) or call 020 7843 6099/67.

If you don't want to receive *Loudspeaker*, or you think that it's time for you to move on from Young NCB, that's no problem. Get in touch via the above email, phone or address to tell us it's time to say goodbye and we will take you off our database.



# Young making a



## join in the fun

### become an advisory group member

**Do you want to be involved in deciding what issues Young NCB tackles, what activities and events are organised, and how Young NCB's money is spent? Then why not join the Young NCB advisory group?**

It is that time of year again – some of our advisory group members are moving on, either because they are over 19 or they have other things to do now, so we need new advisory group members. If you are interested in becoming one of the key people at Young NCB, read on ...

#### **Why should I join the advisory group?**

It's a lot of fun! You get to travel across the country and meet other people your age. You can go on day trips and sometimes get to stay in hotels. Plus you really do get listened to!

#### **What does the advisory group do?**

The group directs the work that Young NCB does. It makes decisions on behalf of Young NCB members and supports the Young NCB representatives on the NCB board.

#### **How does it do that?**

The group gets together six times a year to plan events, talk about what Young NCB's been up to, and help the board representatives get ready for their meetings by giving them ideas about what NCB should be doing.

#### **When does it meet?**

The meetings are held in school holidays or on weekends, six times a year. The group keeps in touch by email, phone and letters between meetings.

#### **Who can become an advisory group member?**

If you're under 19 and a Young NCB member, then you can! We aim to have 16 members in the new group.

#### **Who's going to choose the new advisory group members?**

Some of the current group will choose new members, with support from NCB staff.

#### **What does an advisory group member have to do?**

A member should attend as many meetings as possible. They have to be prepared to work as part of a team. Oh, and they need to be enthusiastic about speaking out on behalf of other young people.

#### **OK, but how much will it cost me?**

Not a penny. Young NCB will pay for your travel expenses – wherever you live – and will provide refreshments for all advisory group meetings.

#### **Sounds good – what do I do next?**

Drop Lucy or Adriana an email on [info@youngncb.org.uk](mailto:info@youngncb.org.uk) or call 020 7843 6067 to get an application form. And keep your eye on the website ([www.youngncb.org.uk](http://www.youngncb.org.uk)) for updates about the advisory group.

# difference

## can you hear me?

**My name is Nathan Poole and I am 15 years old. I sit on the Young NCB advisory group and earlier this year I was chosen by the advisory group to go to a three-day event in Brussels called Can You Hear Me? The event was about social exclusion (when people get left out) and young people, and how it affects them in today's world.**

Before going I felt really proud but nervous. Nervous because I was going to represent England, but I knew I would be working alongside Daisy from England (she was the other Young NCB member who went with me and the adult workers), and with all the other young people from different European countries, including Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary and a few more.

Before coming to the event, all the young people were asked to bring two topics with them that reflect the problems they and their friends have in the countries where they live, which mean that they get left out. Daisy and I took 'Stuff 2Do' with us as our main topic. We split this into two: 'Stuff 2Do in the countryside' and 'Stuff 2Do in cities', because I live in a rural area and the issues I face, for example not being able to get to things because there's no public transport, are different to the ones that Daisy faces living in a big city.

The first day after we arrived we had a bit of getting to know each other time and then got straight into the work.

We discussed how we would work together and present our problems to the members of the European Parliament (MEPs). We decided to merge all the topics together and show the key problems young people face in four main areas.

The four topics we finished up with were:

- ★ education
- ★ discrimination
- ★ money
- ★ anti-social behaviour.

On the second day, in the morning we got a bit of free time to shop and see the city! Then towards the afternoon we all went to the parliament building to do our presentation. There was a big turnout for this event, even though MEPs normally have a lot of other things to do. We presented our problems in short role-plays and speeches. At the end, I said to everyone, 'I hope that you enjoyed the presentation but I hope you learned from it too.' I asked a question which I didn't expect people to reply to: 'What will MEPs do to take our problems forward?'

But then many MEPs spoke and said, 'We will think about children and young people as much as we can in every aspect of our work. We will bear in mind what it will mean for them.'

On the whole, the event was a busy one but also an informative one, because I learnt that young people across the globe experience similar kinds of problems that young people experience in England, whether that is lack of transport, bullying or not having much money. I also made many friends and I learnt how other young people live their lives in other parts of the world.

The trip has also changed my mind on countries being part of Europe! I now feel that people would understand the problems that children and young people face, and be more effective in getting things done, if we were all one.

If you went on a similar trip, maybe it would change your mind too?





# speaking out about

## ***your shout!***

**if you were prime minister, what would you change?**

***I would help homeless people by providing them with food and shelter. I would make the superstores give homeless people a regular meal ... everyday so they wouldn't have to beg for money to survive. For shelter, I'd ask the council to allot one room for each homeless person to make sure they are safe!***

Nishant, 13, London

***The main thing I would change would be institutional racism ... I would allow children and young people who have come to Britain in fear of danger in their home country to stay and have specific housing and finance.***

Aisha, 14, Birmingham

***I would make more houses available to homeless people. I think that places where homeless people go to get help with housing are sometimes very unhelpful.***

Amani, 13, London

***I would stop all bullying and violence in and out of schools!***

Vicky, 15, Preston

***I would let children have as much say as adults. I would do a lot about the environment. I would try to stop global warming. I would make the money between primary and secondary schools equal. I would stop bullying and violence in school. I would do more for people going to college and university so people would have less debt ... I would lower the working age to deliver local papers and to get weekend jobs to any age as long as parents give permission ... I would tell schools to create a business with each year group and they could learn through that.***

Gemma, 10, Liverpool

***I would stop abortion, as I'm totally against it. I would also give young people more rights.***

Jessica, 15, Croydon

## **it would be a crime not to be listened to**

**Young NCB members recently spoke to the Metropolitan Police about crime in London. Here Rhiannon Law (age 16) and Stephanie Cadogan-White (age 15) tell us all about it.**

On 7 May 2005 we travelled up to City Hall in central London to attend a conference about crime. The aim of the conference was for young people to give their views on crime issues in London and what the Metropolitan Police should do about crime over the next five years.

On first impression, we were very pleased with how friendly the others at NCB were and we felt our views on crime were listened to. We were even given money for our travel and had a free lunch, which was very considerate.

At City Hall we met with between 20 and 30 other young people – which was a nice experience as we got to share our ideas and to get to know other young people living in London. We worked in groups to discuss our views on crime and got to question a police officer about our concerns.

We noticed how negative young people's views about police are, as many found police officers rude, uninterested and discriminating towards young people, which prevents people from reporting crimes. Therefore this conference was very important because it highlights to the police how they actually come across to the public.

During the day we were filmed in groups and individually, sharing our concerns on crime with the police. We enjoyed this as we were given the opportunity for our voices to be heard and also we got to listen to other people's views. We're hoping the police take notice of our views. It will also be a great idea for more young people to get involved in these conferences as there will hopefully be more ideas and different opinions highlighted.

As we were impressed with the conference, we've both now joined Young NCB as we've realised how much our opinions matter, although the issue of crime should also be discussed in other areas outside London. However, levels of crime in London are quite high, meaning this issue is especially important to be dealt with in London.





# out youth issues!

## green paper for youth conference

**On 18 March 2005, Young NCB advisory group members Emily, Idris and Hannah spoke to over 200 people at a conference about a draft law that will affect young people. Here Emily Middleton (age 15) tells us what they spoke out about at the conference.**

There is a new Green Paper – a draft law – on life outside school for 13- to 19-year-olds due out very soon. This Paper will include some pretty important stuff, like the future of Connexions and what activities the government will provide for young people after school and during the holidays. So when I was given the opportunity to speak at a conference on the Green Paper for youth, I jumped at the chance.

Along with two other Young NCB advisory group members, Idris and Hannah, I spoke in a special presentation about young people's views on the Green Paper. We spoke on a platform in front of over 200 delegates and answered their questions. When we first went up on stage I was terrified! But there was an encouraging, positive feeling in the hall that soon put us at ease – most of the delegates were very interested to hear what we had to say, as there

were only four young people speaking in the entire conference. Our presentation began with Hannah telling the packed room the four key things we had found young people wanted in their lives: respect, responsibility, independence and the right to be heard.

It's expected that the government will announce plans for a new youth 'smart card' in the Green Paper, so we set out what we wanted this new card to include. Some of our priorities included shopping discounts, cheaper travel and less expensive leisure facilities for cardholders, which Idris illustrated by telling the delegates about a time when he was given a free pass to his local leisure centre. We also proposed a points system that could be on a chip in the smart card. Young people could earn points by volunteering or doing extra-curricular activities, and then claim these points back in shops, cinemas, theatres and leisure centres. We also suggested that the card should be available from the age of 11 rather than 13, because this is the age when you start secondary school.

Despite being nerve-racking at first, our presentation went very well and we were able to enjoy the rest of the day, which included panel debates, presentations from adult speakers – and lots of platefuls of chocolate biscuits.

## children and youth board recruits new members

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) and the British Youth Council (BYC) have just recruited 25 eight- to eighteen-year-olds to give advice to the government about issues that affect young people. Together, they will make up the Children and Youth Board, which is now in its second year. And one of the people that has been picked is our very own Young NCB member, Emily Middleton. Congratulations Emily!

The 25 young people will advise the Department for Education and Skills on areas such as government policy, the behaviour of children and young people in schools and youth participation in Europe. One of the new recruits said that they were looking forward to 'influencing ministers' decisions and making sure young people are heard'.

Earlier this month the young people went on their first residential weekend in London, where they got to meet each other for the first time, and to learn how government works as well as choose which issues that they wanted to focus on. Lucy Read, who is coordinating the board's work, said, 'It was fantastic to have so many children and young people all under one roof expressing their views on what the government should be doing to tackle the issues that are important to them.'



# member news

## what's on



### We have a winner!

Do you remember the competition to design the running vest for Young NCB's team of runners in the British 10k Open Road Race in July? Well, we have a winner!

Congratulations to Edwina Challioner, aged 17, from Garstang near Preston, for her fantastic entry (pictured above). It was printed on all 36 of the 10k team's running vests.

The Young NCB team did really well and you'll find a full report on the highs, the lows (and the blisters ...) in the next issue of *Loudspeaker*.

### What's the big idea?

Some of you may remember an article about the Children's Centre Project from the last issue of *Loudspeaker*. The Children's Centre Project is a group of children's charities that want to work together more closely and are thinking about moving in to a new building together in London. They want to make sure that this building is a place where young people will feel welcome, and Young NCB has been asked to help them with their 'Big Idea'! There will be opportunities for you to get involved as part of the Big Idea's advisory group, and we'll be sending you more information soon.

### Children's rights talkshops

Keep an eye out for information about a series of Young NCB children's rights talkshops, coming soon to a town near YOU! Plans are still being made and pencils still being chewed, but we're almost ready to let you in on the secret. All we can disclose for now is that there are going to be three regional talkshops followed by a big national event. If you want to know more about your rights, then stay tuned!

## member profile



**Aisha Mahmood is 14 and comes from Birmingham. She joined Young NCB last summer. We tracked her down in the middle of her revision to ask her a few questions and find out more about her ...**

**We know you signed up through the Young NCB website. How come you were visiting at the site? What do you use the site for?**

I was looking for something I could do to contribute to the community, but something that was fun at the same time. Young NCB seemed perfect!

**You said that you are interested in helping to get the views across of people who don't think they have a chance to be involved (particularly Asian young people). Do you have any ideas about how Young NCB can do this? Or how we can get these people involved in Young NCB's work?**

I think young people need to understand how important it is for them to get involved in their issues, whatever their race. Many of them have taken a step back and are letting the grown-ups make the decisions and I think if Young NCB highlighted some of the issues which young people think are unreasonable

(for example ASBOs) it would motivate them to raise their voices.

**Wow, that was a tricky question ... now for something a bit simpler! What are you studying?**

I'll be starting my GCSEs next year. I've chosen to do art, history, religious studies and German as well as the compulsory courses.

**Do you have any idea what you want to do after school? A career?**

My ideal career at the moment would be art therapy, which is using art to help people express themselves. The range of people art therapists help is large, from children to prisoners. But I like to stay open-minded; I've got a while to go yet!

**What are your likes and dislikes? How about music?**

I haven't got a favourite type of music, but my top artists at the moment have got to be Damien Rice and James Blunt. I'm not sure what their music is classed as but they use a lot of guitar and piano!

**Do you have any other interests?**

I love surfing the net, and just recently set up my own blog. I also like reading, but I haven't got much free time because of schoolwork.

**If a Young NCB member was coming to visit your city, what is the one thing you would suggest they go and visit?**

I think the one place a visitor would have to see in Birmingham is Lickey Hills Country Park. It's great for walking, nature watching, and you can see nearly the whole of Birmingham from one point. There's always the Bullring for the shopaholics though!

**Do you have a message for anyone who is thinking about becoming a Young NCB member?**

Becoming a Young NCB member is great. Your voices are heard and it opens up a whole range of opportunities. And its fun!