

Loudspeaker

Young NCB members magazine

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In this issue: Get ready for Anti-Bullying Week



Emily jumps aboard the Bashy Bus in Jamaica

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Welcome...



As my time in Young NCB is drawing to a close, I'm looking back on the last three years with more than normal sadness.

That's because of the tragic death of fellow member Idris Olasupo in August. Idris was an active, enthusiastic and friendly member of the advisory group for three years, and I'm sure I'm not alone in saying I will miss him very, very much.

Amongst my memories of Idris, one stands out: the Green Paper for Youth Conference in March 2005 that he, Hannah Gibney and I made a presentation at. Neither Idris nor I had ever spoken to such a large audience before, and we were both terrified. Despite this, Idris made an emphatic speech advocating free access to leisure centres and opportunities to play sport for young people, which was incredibly well-received. I remember feeling very proud to be sharing a stage with such an inspirational person, and to be representing young people through Young NCB.

That pride has never faltered throughout my three years in Young NCB. I've felt honoured to be a part of such a fantastic organisation; an organisation with true vision, dynamic members, and a strong dedication to getting children and young people's voices heard. As well as giving me the chance to speak up for young people, Young NCB has made me a more confident person, too. I've made speeches, met loads of different people, run workshops and discussed all aspects of NCB at Board meetings with over 20 professionals: not your average teenage experiences.

My final message would be, if you haven't already, get involved with Young NCB as much as you can. The impact you can have on others, the government and yourself is extraordinary. Never give up: keep speaking out!

Emily Middleton, 17
Young NCB advisory group and NCB board of management member

In memory of Idris Olasupo 1989–2007



It was with great sadness we received news of the death of Young NCB Member, Idris Olasupo, who died in a tragic car accident on 25 August alongside two of his friends.

Idris had been a very active and committed member of Young NCB since 2004. He joined because he felt strongly about taking action on issues important to him and other children and young people.

Not long after Idris joined Young NCB as a shy 15-year-old, he spoke at a national conference to talk about his views on the government's ideas for improving life for 13- to 19-year-olds. Despite being nervous, he spoke to an audience of more than 200 adults, talking

passionately about young people having the freedom to take part in positive activities instead of being on the street.

Idris was also part of NCB's young advisory group from 2005-06, working with 11 other young people to plan Young NCB's work. From September 2005 to January 2007 he took part in NCB's 'Big Idea' project.

It was an absolute pleasure working with Idris, we will miss him very much and we remain grateful for the work he did with NCB. Idris will be fondly remembered for his brilliant sense of humour, his great love of football and his huge commitment to improving the lives of children and young people.



Putting children and young people first

Most of us don't feel as though we have a say in the way we live and what we do with our lives. We want changes and have great ideas that simply no one will listen to. The NCB event entitled 'Putting children and young people first' was a chance for our ideas and voices to be heard. But how far did they go?

If you're anything like me, then you will be questioning this. It's great that we can suggest changes and talk about topics of interest to us, but who's to say that anything will be done? Well, apart from the presence of various NCB members and staff, what really made a change was the attendance of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. These people aim to find the pros and cons of our childhood and are therefore really interested in what we have to say.



The day was filled with a variety of activities, talks and entertainment – even a chocolate fountain. From experience, it was definitely a worthwhile event.

Naushin Shariff, 16



Children's Workforce Development Council



'I went to see my Connexions worker and they sat there the whole time looking at their watch like they didn't really have the time to see me.'

'People that care for children should love them like they are their own child. I know that if I was living with someone I would want that – if I couldn't be with my mum and dad I wouldn't want to feel any less special.'

Have you got a Connexions worker or a learning mentor? Do you have a foster carer or a social worker? Maybe when you were younger you went to a nursery?

There's an organisation whose job it is to support the people who work with children and young people and their families and carers to be even better at their jobs.

The organisation is called the CWDC, which is short for the Children's Workforce Development Council, and it supports and encourages the children's workforce to:

- learn new skills
- talk to each other and share good ideas
- get the help they need to do their jobs well.

CWDC does this by:

- providing support for the people who work with children who can't live with their parents such as foster carers, people who work in children's homes and children's social workers
- working to make sure the right people are in the right job and make it easier to be able to move between jobs
- making sure working with young children and babies is seen as an important job.
- making sure all the people who work with children and young people talk to each other and work together to make sure that what they do is based on what each individual child needs.

CWDC believe that children and young people are the experts in what it's like to be a child or young person today, and they want to know your opinions on the people they work with.

If you're interested in being involved then please get in touch.

Getting involved will mean you can:

- help to decide how children and young people are involved in CWDC's work
- decide some of the projects that money is given to
- be part of Takeover Day in November – a chance for children and young people to 'take over' CWDC
- share your stories and experiences and tell us and the government what you want from the people who work with you
- help create a website for young people
- be involved with research.

If you want to know more go to www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/cyp/cyp_index or email us@cwdcouncil.org.uk



Peer education ... Jamaica style ...

HIV, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is the most talked-about virus on the planet – which is understandable, since about 40 million people around the globe are HIV positive. Shockingly, 2.3 million of these are children under the age of 15; that's enough kids to fill Old Trafford to bursting point more than 30 times over.

I'd always known the statistics about HIV were terrible, but I'd never really known how to help tackle HIV. This summer, I was one of seven UNICEF UK Youth Advisers who went to Jamaica to find out.



The stigma surrounding HIV is a particularly big problem in Jamaica. One HIV-infected boy I spoke to, Jordan, aged 10, said that he hadn't told his friends he was infected 'because I don't want them to feel bad and not play with me again'.

Some of Jamaica's youth are fighting the stigma that children like Jordan are so worried about. We visited several UNICEF-funded projects where peer educators aim to stop people discriminating against those with HIV, and to halt the spread of HIV by educating other young people. But what they do is far from a traditional classroom lesson.

Most of the projects we visited use dance, music and drama to get their messages across. One group even travels with a brightly coloured bus, named the 'Bashy Bus', which means 'Party Bus'. Instead of rows of seats, it has an HIV testing clinic on board, and counselling services. The group puts on short plays to educate the community and encourage locals to pay the bus a visit.

We also visited Portland Aids Association (PAA), and joined them for a 'Walk and Talk'. This involves splitting up into small groups, walking round the town, talking to locals about HIV, and then doing a condom demonstration. Since condoms are the easiest and most effective way of protecting yourself from HIV, this element of the PAA's work is particularly important. When I joined a group, some women we spoke to thought you could catch HIV by drinking from the same cup as someone who was infected; some other people didn't know how to put on a condom properly.

The visit to Jamaica made me want to spread the word about HIV; the first step to tackling the virus is making sure everyone's clued-up about it. It also made me think that maybe we need to spice up peer education in the UK; involve drama and music, for example, or try something completely different like a 'Walk and Talk'.

To find out more about HIV and how you can help to tackle it, visit www.unicef.org.uk/youthvoice

Emily Middleton, 17

Are you ready for Anti-Bullying Week?

This year the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) has decided to explore the theme of bullying in the community. Schools already have a responsibility to make sure that children and young people are safe inside school, but headteachers also have a role to play outside of the school gates. ABA believes that all children and young people should be safe no matter where they are and have chosen the slogan '*Safer together, safer wherever*' for this year's campaign.

From past research, ABA knows that bullying does happen in the wider community, but believes that more research needs to be done to find out how big a problem it is. To find out what children and young people really think, ABA is running a survey for seven- to 18-year-olds.

ABA wants to find out how safe children and young people feel in their community, whether they have experienced bullying outside school, and if so in which places? ABA is also asking in what ways being bullied outside of school differs to being bullied in school, and who children and young people are most likely to tell. Most importantly, we are asking children and young people to let us know what support they need to deal with bullying outside of school.

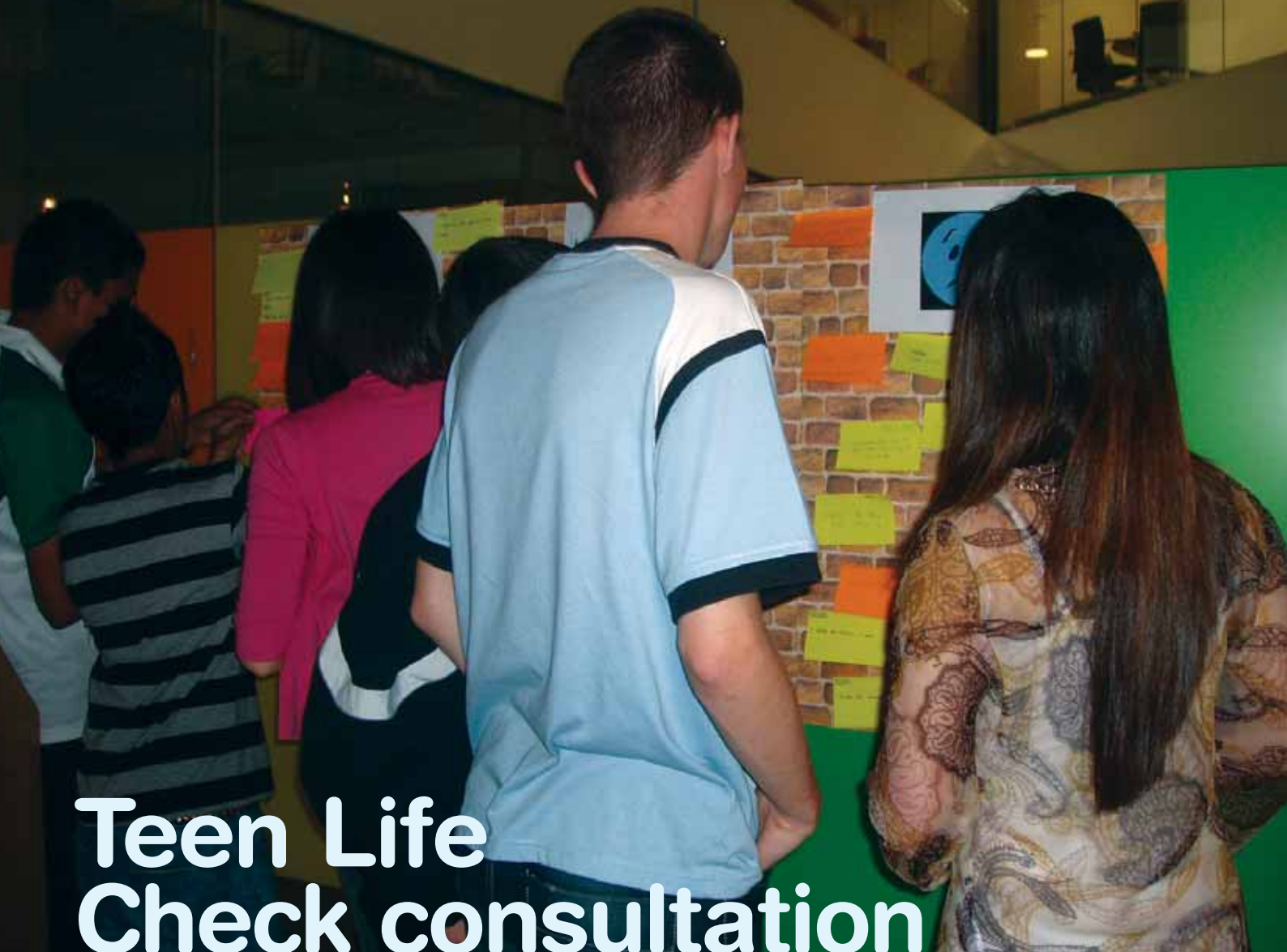
Safer together,
safer wherever

Anti-Bullying Week
19-23 November 2007



The online survey will be sent out to all Young NCB members so please help us by taking a minute to fill it in, and passing the web link on to your friends – two lucky respondents will each get two tickets to see WICKED the West End musical!

You can find out more about ABA and Anti-Bullying Week 2007 at: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk



Teen Life Check consultation

The Teen Life Check website is a new sophisticated and educational site that can help kids of all ages.

The website involves a series of seemingly innocuous questions that actually evaluate the state of your life. It identifies the areas of your life in which you might need help, and points you in the right direction. Depending on its recommendation, it may suggest you use organisations such as ChildLine.

The site has many facilities that you can benefit from, for example, it lists amenities in your area that you can access. It is also supported by the NHS and need2know, which are reliable organisations.

The website has a vibrant layout and uses an excellent combination of bright pictures and text.

Our task in the Teen Life Check consultation was to alter the site in

order to make it 'child friendly'. This was a great experience as I was able to learn many new skills. They took on board everything we had to say so they could change the site using our feedback.

The process started with a short activity so all the participants could get to know one another. After that we began to share our ideas about our first impressions of the site and what we thought we could do to improve it.

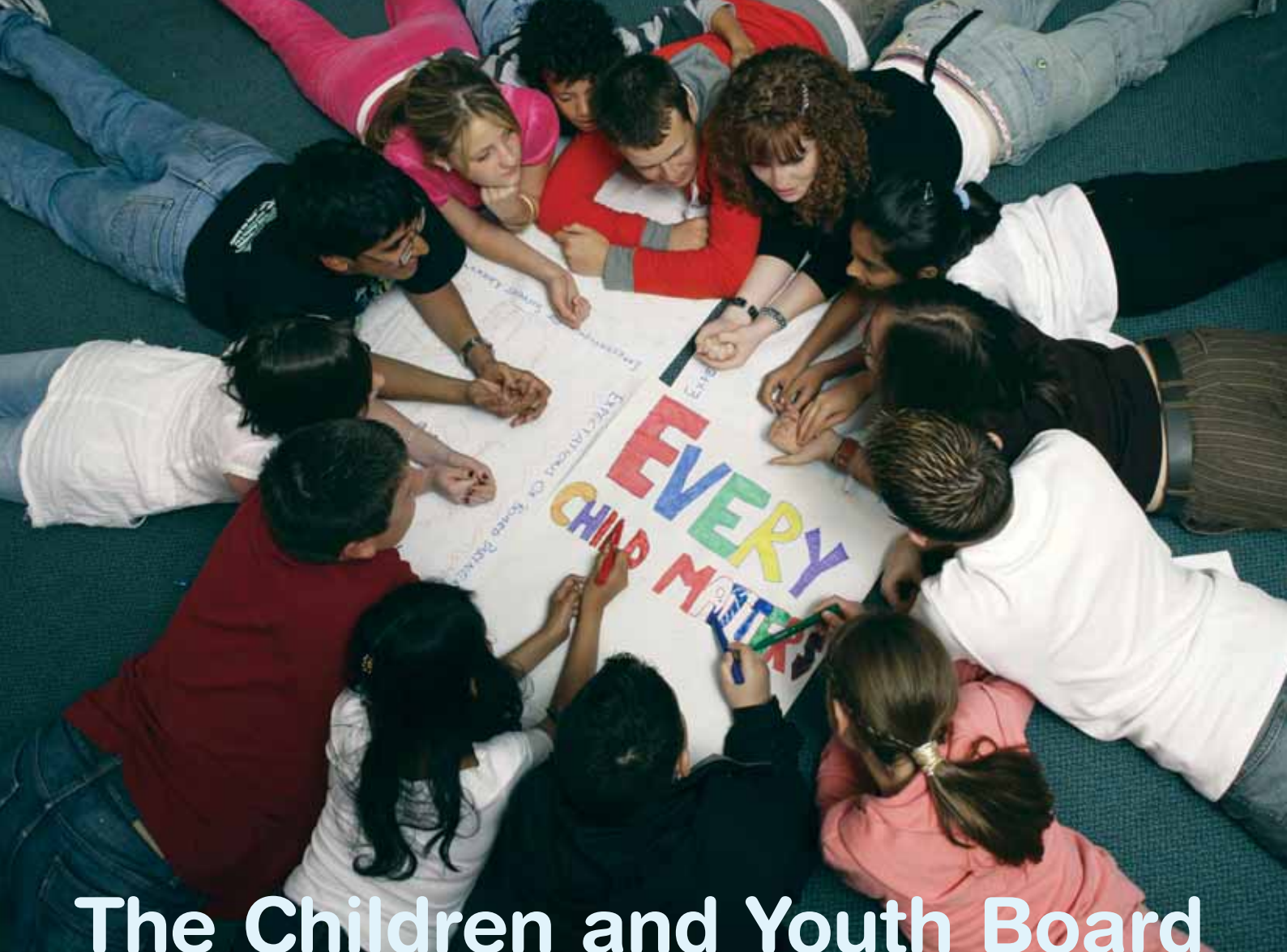
We then did a series of activities, like rating the site on a scale of one to 10. We had several breaks during which snacks and drinks were provided. The best part was table football, which we could all play on during the breaks. Overall the whole event was brilliant and I was able to make many new friends and learn important skills.

To conclude, Teen Life Check is a very important website for all children, and

the slogan 'Check It before You Wreck It' signifies its useful qualities. Make sure you check out <http://tlc.need2know.co.uk>

Mohanish Maroo, 13





The Children and Youth Board

The Children and Youth Board (CYB) is an advisory group made up of 25 children and young people aged between eight and 18. It was set up by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) as a way for children and young people to share their ideas on different areas of the department's work and policies. The two most important things about the board are that it discusses issues that affect young people and gets young people's views heard.

In my area (Nottingham) we have a council for children called the Children's Forum, which I was part of. One of its workers sent me a letter explaining what the CYB is and an application form. The worker chose me because she thought that I would have a lot to say and I would share my opinions, thoughts and ideas.

When I got the application form I thought that it would be a great

opportunity for me to share my ideas. I filled it in and sent it off as soon as possible. The next week I received a phone call from the CYB inviting me to an interview. I was very excited and happy when I was asked for an interview, but I was a little scared, because I didn't know what they would ask me. When they explained that it was informal I felt less nervous. When I got the place, I was over the moon.

So far the board has had a residential trip in London. I made lots of new friends, met up with all the workers and had a great time. We did lots of work and we had fun at the same time.

We found out where everyone comes from, talked about what being on the board means to us, and set ground rules for being a CYB member. Our main task was to meet people from DCSF and share our views on healthy living. Some people said 'a healthier lifestyle means a good life and less illness' some said

that 'advertising on TV, restaurant windows, displays and magazines makes it hard to resist junk food'. The board also thought that the government could teach children from playgroups and nurseries to eat healthier so that they carry it on throughout their lives.

We have also had our first ministerial meeting (we have three each year). Before the meeting we discussed what we were going to talk about, and made presentations in small groups on our top ideas for a healthier lifestyle, which we then showed to the ministers. Later on in the day we actually got to meet two MPs, Beverly Hughes and Kevin Brennan. It was fun to meet both ministers and we asked them many questions. They also asked us a lot of questions and were very keen to know what we hope to get out of the board.

Faiza Qureshi, 12
Member of the DCSF Children and Youth Board

Member views

Putting the record straight



I get fed up with negative images of young people in the media. Pick up a newspaper or watch the television and what do you see? Constant messages about 'jobs'. If you simply took notice of what you read or watched, you would think that all young people were bad and did nothing but get

into trouble. The future of the country would seem to be in danger.

But who is to blame? Is it editors of newspapers and TV programmes? And, more importantly, what can be done about it?

This summer I spoke to a local journalist, and was pleasantly surprised. She told me that newspapers would actually welcome positive stories about young people to balance the usual diet of stories about young people involved in muggings. True to her word, she asked me about my involvement with NCB, and did a really positive story about us.

So what is the lesson? I think it is up to us to refuse to accept the constant stream of negative stories about young people, and to write a letter to the editors of newspapers, radio and TV programmes to put the record straight when we see a story that seems to be making all young people look bad. You never know, you might be pleasantly surprised, just like me, and they might be delighted to write a good, positive story to balance out all the negative stuff.

Does this mean that all young people are good? Of course not. Just like there are good and bad middle-aged and old people, so there are good and bad young people too. It's up to us to make sure the good bits don't get overlooked. Put pen to paper now – if we allow negative stereotypes about ourselves to be the norm, we only have ourselves to blame.

Emma Ratcliffe, 11

Member profile...



Name: Nishant Mittal

Age: 16

Lives: London

Young NCB member since:
February 2005

How did you become involved with Young NCB and what have you done so far?

One of my teachers at school asked me if I would like to join Young NCB. The first project I got involved in was helping to design a new building. I take part in consultations from time to time – these have included one on the YNCB advisory group and, more recently, one about an online teenage health survey. I have also taken part in training as a young recruiter for NCB, so I am looking forward to interviewing some people there!

What has been the best thing you've done with Young NCB?

Being trained as a young recruiter. I learnt some important things about what goes on during the recruitment process, as well as gaining new skills for my future.

What are the main things that stop children and young people getting their voices heard?

Too many adults making decisions for us, and young people not being informed about how much they can do to help the community. If they had a chance to change something for the better, they'd certainly take the opportunity to do it.

Who do you admire in your life?

My parents because they have worked so hard for me for as long as I can remember. They have been a great inspiration and I always make sure I do whatever it takes to return the favour.

If you could have 'special powers' for the day what would they be?

The ability to change people's minds, as this is probably the only thing that can eliminate the negative in the world. I would use it to inspire people to do the right thing and help others.

What are your plans for the future?

To gain excellent grades at GCSE, get into a good college and hopefully land a good job within a business or start my own. I do have a liking for the transport and logistics business, but let's wait and see what happens!

What one day in your life would you like to live again?

The first time I saw my nephew. He was so attached to me and being with him made me feel like a responsible person. He is in Canada now and misses me a lot, but I will go to see him soon.

What are the biggest issues for young people your age today?

Getting their voices heard. I know a lot of people who have ideas for change but don't know how to make contact with the authorities. We need to inform young people about how they can get their voices heard.

And finally ... do you have any words of wisdom for your fellow Young NCBers?

I got this quotation from someone at NCB and I quite liked it: 'Try to observe and point out the negatives in things as without that it is impossible to improve them'.

If you would like to feature on this page let Adriana know by calling 020 7843 6099 or emailing abyrne@ncb.org.uk