

Speaking Out project update

Speaking Out Policy priorities for 2009-2011

In December 2008, the Speaking Out project conducted a survey to help shape and prioritise the project's policy work and future activities for 2009-2011. Overall, respondents found the issues of social exclusion and community empowerment to be the most useful policy issues that the Speaking Out project has covered to date. The top five areas that respondents would like to see the project focus on in the future include: youth employment, education and training; community cohesion and citizenship; health; youth justice; and housing and homelessness.

For more information >> [Policy priorities](#)

Regional Events: Participation with young refugees and asylum seekers

In February and March 2009, NCVYS organised two round table events as part of the Speaking Out Regional Events series. The London event focused on before and after youth crime looking at prevention as well as resettlement which the seminar in Peterborough looked at the emerging debate around social mobility. Children England is organising an event in Manchester on 26 March in partnership with the Children's Society. Participants will hear directly from young refugees and asylum seekers on their views and experiences in accessing services.

For more information >> [Participation event](#)

Call for expressions of interest on two research tenders

Speaking Out is currently calling for expressions of interest on two pieces of scoping research: one will look at health and well-being issues relating to children and young people, and the other will focus on community empowerment. The research will identify key emerging challenges for the children and young people's voluntary and community sector, highlight existing good practice, identify routes of influence and recommend areas for further development.

>> [Community empowerment research tender](#) (Deadline 13 March)

>> [Health and well-being research tender](#) (Deadline 23 March)

New briefing papers

We have published five new briefing papers >> [Full briefings](#)

No. 14: 2012 Olympic Legacy - November 2008

No. 15: The 2008 Drug Strategy - December 2008

No. 16: Environment - December 2008

No. 17: Children, young people and disability - February 2009

No. 18: Small Grants Programme - February 2009

To order free hard copies email: speakingout@ncvys.org.uk or call: 020 7278 1041.

Small Grants Programme 2009

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) has now closed and successful applicants will be announced by the end of April. To access the case studies from last year's projects, please see the Small Grants Programme review briefing paper.

For more information >> [Small Grants Programme](#)

In the news

Community cohesion and empowerment

Young people interview Secretary of State for Cohesion

In February 2009, two members of the Young Muslims' Advisory Group interviewed the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for cohesion, Sadiq Khan MP, about the situation in Gaza. The interview is available online.

For more information >> [YMAG interview](#)

Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: A third progress report

In February 2009, the Government published a progress report on its commitment to creating strong cohesive communities which was originally launched in January 2005 through *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society*. The progress report includes a detailed statistical breakdown called 'Race Equality in Public Services' (REPS).

For more information >> [Progress report](#)

Employment, education and training

National Apprenticeships Week - 21,000 posts in the public sector

In February 2009, as part of National Apprenticeships Week, Skills Secretary John Denham and Children's Secretary Ed Balls announced that 21,000 apprenticeships will be created in 2009-10 in NHS and social care services, further education colleges and universities, local government posts and central government departments.

For more information >> [National Apprenticeships Week](#)

Health

Strategy for people with learning disabilities

In January 2009, the Department of Health published *Valuing People Now - A Three Year Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities* – presenting a new vision for improving services for people with learning disabilities across health, housing, employment and community care services.

For more information >> [Valuing People Now](#)

Change4Life children's health survey

In February 2009, as part of the Change4Life campaign, the Department of Health launched a survey of children's health - 'How Are the Kids?'. Families in England are being asked to give information about their eating and activity habits. In return they will receive a specially tailored plan including healthy diet and activity tips.

For more information >> [Change4Life](#)

Strategy for children and young people's health

In February 2009, the Government published a joint strategy *Healthy lives, brighter future: the strategy for children and young people's health*, presenting the Government's vision for children and young people's health and wellbeing. In addition, the Government announced £340 million to support children with disabilities and their families.

For more information >> [Health strategy](#)

For a sector-specific briefing paper >> [Policy briefing](#)

Additional funding for better access to contraception and support

In February 2009, following the publication of the Under 18 Conception Statistics 1998-2007 by the Office of National Statistics, which showed an increase in teen pregnancies by 2.6% in 2007, the Government announced an extra £20.5 million to help young people get better access to contraception and support, and raise the awareness of the risks of unprotected sex. The Government had originally pledged to halve pregnancy rates among girls under 18 by 2010 from a 1998 baseline.

For more information >> [Contraception and support](#)

Youth Justice

Home Office Community Fund

In December 2008, the Home Office launched a £4.5 million Community Fund for local community groups to run activities for young people in 13 priority areas, in an aim to tackle youth violence. The fund is aimed at intensive work with young people through mentoring and outreach work and voluntary and community organisations can apply for grant funding of up to £10,000 per annum for three years. The application deadline is 3 April 2009.

For more information >> [Community Fund](#)

Safe accommodation for those escaping gangs

In February 2009, the Government announced a new scheme to provide safe accommodation for people at serious risk of violence associated with gang or weapon crime in Southwark. Funded jointly by Communities and Local Government and the Metropolitan police, Southwark Council's new initiative 'SERVE' - Southwark Rehousing Victims of Violence Enterprise - will provide properties across London and the South East through an innovative agreement between the Council and a number of registered social landlords.

For more information >> [Safe accommodation](#)

Response to improving the trial process for young witnesses

In February 2009, the Ministry of Justice published plans to give young, vulnerable witnesses better support and encourage more witnesses to come forward with evidence of crimes, following a consultation on *Improving the Criminal Trial Process for Young Witnesses*.

For more information >> [Young witnesses](#)

Call to allow more offenders to volunteer

In March 2009, Baroness Julia Neuberger, the Government's volunteering Champion, published a report recommending a permanent Volunteering Champion to co-

ordinate good volunteering practice across the Criminal Justice System (CJS) agencies; a Joint Guidance, by the trade union movement and Volunteering England, on the use of volunteers within the public services; and that all CJS agencies should have a strategy to engage the skills of ex-offenders in volunteering. Justice Minister, Shahid Malik was appointed as the volunteering champion within the CJS.

For more information >> [Offender volunteering](#)

General

New Opportunities White Paper

In January 2009, the Government published *New Opportunities: Fair chances for the future*, setting out the Government's agenda on social mobility. Proposals included: £57m to extend free childcare for disadvantaged two year olds; support for high potential young people from low income backgrounds to get to university; a community volunteering programme for those not in education, employment or training; employment support for young people leaving care; and an £15m communities fund to tackle deprivation.

For more information >> [New Opportunities](#)

For a sector-specific briefing paper >> [Policy briefing](#)

Social Mobility Commission's report

In January 2009, the independent Social Mobility Commission, set up by Liberal Democrats and chaired by Barnardo's Chief Executive Martin Narey, published its policy recommendations.

For more information >> [Social Mobility report](#)

New fund for small organisations

In January 2009, Futurebuilders and the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning (NPTSC) launched the Small Organisation Tender Fund, to help finance tendering costs or capacity building work - such as legal costs, advice from procurement specialists, financial expertise and bidding staff costs - to help small organisations win specific public sector contracts.

For more information >> [Small organisations fund](#)

Review of ChangeUp and Futurebuilders

In February 2009, the National Audit Office published a report on building capacity in the third sector. It found that two government programmes - ChangeUp and Futurebuilders - have had an impact on frontline third sector organisations but have not demonstrated value for money.

For more information >> [Review](#)

Action plan for the third sector

In February 2009, the Office of the Third Sector published the action plan - *Real help for communities: Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises* - pledging £42.5 million to help the sector deliver extra help during the global economic downturn. The measures include support for a volunteer brokerage scheme, resilience funding for communities most at risk of increased deprivation and help with the cost of mergers, partnerships and moves.

For more information >> [Action plan](#)

Consultations and Events

Speaking Out consults on child poverty proposals

In March 2009, Speaking Out submitted a response on the Department for Children, Schools and Families consultation on the proposed Child Poverty Bill. The consultation called for more accountability and higher expectations, where Government, devolved administrations, local government, charities, unions and families themselves work together to end child poverty.

For more information on the submission, contact Sophie Griffiths, sophie@childrenengland.org.uk or 0207 833 3319.

Youth Justice in the Core Cities Conference - 17-18 March 2009, Nottingham

The aim of this conference is to unite various organisations and charities working with children and young people who commit crime, and other key stakeholders in the youth justice system. Speakers include: Beverley Hughes MP, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, DCSF, Frances Done, Chair, Youth Justice Board, England and Wales and Andrew Bridges, HM Chief Inspector of Probation.

For more information >> [Youth justice conference](#)

Tackling crime during a recession - 23 April 2009, London

The Local Government Association is organising a conference on exploring what impact recessions have on crime; analysing what is happening locally and predicting hotspots and trends in crime; learning about the key role of reducing repeat victimisation to beat acquisitive crime; and hearing what other local authorities and crime reduction partnerships are already doing. Speakers at the conference will include senior representatives from within local and central government, as well as from other organisations.

For more information >> [Crime in a recession](#)

Information resources

Community cohesion and empowerment

Sense of belonging

In January 2009, Communities and Local Government published a number of guidance documents relation to community cohesion and building a sense of belonging. These include:

- [Guidance on building a local sense of belonging](#): Aimed at councils and voluntary groups, particularly local cohesion practitioners and those working in areas where building a sense of belonging and supporting the delivery of improved community cohesion are key priorities.
- [Guidance on meaningful interaction](#): How encouraging positive relationships between people can help build community cohesion - based on research findings and the views of expert practitioners.

Employment, education and training

Understanding NEET young people

In January 2009, the Department for Children, Schools and Families published research entitled *Increasing Participation - Understanding Young People who do not Participate in Education or Training at 16 or 17*. The aim was to provide a more detailed breakdown of the 'types' of young people who are either Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or in a Job without Training (JWT) at 16 and 17, as well as the structural and personal issues they face and the likely routes into participation in learning for each of them.

For more information >> [Understanding NEET](#)

Housing and Homelessness

CAF Youth Homelessness Guidance

In February 2009, the Government published non-statutory guidance for children's services and housing services in using the Common Assessment Framework when dealing with young people who are homeless or at risk of being made homeless. This guidance builds upon the guidance, *Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children and young people*, that was issued by DCSF and Communities and Local Government in May 2008.

For more information >> [Youth Homelessness Guidance](#)

Housing & Accommodation

Viability Assessment Scheme Tool (VAST) is a new piece of software that helps organisations assess the viability of accommodation or floating support schemes. The flexible tool allows agencies to set their own benchmarks and can be tailored to include any additional or alternative measures particular to that sector, such as environmental impact, social return on investment, or client outcomes.

For more information >> [Assessment tool](#)

Youth Justice

Audit Commission's report on funding services for young people

In January 2009, the Audit Commission published the *Tired of Hanging Around* report showing that it costs 4 times as much to put a young person through the criminal justice system as it does to keep them out of it. However sport and leisure projects designed to help keep teens on the straight and narrow struggle with a funding system that is wasteful, inefficient and bureaucratic. In fact, youth workers can spend a third of their time (the equivalent of £8,000) managing budgets and chasing new funding.

For more information >> [AC report](#)

Crime abroad

In January 2009, the Policy Exchange published case studies on tackling gun and knife crime using examples from abroad. The document *Getting to the point - Reducing gun and knife crime in Britain: lessons from abroad* – makes a series of

recommendations which stress better partnership working and information sharing, and require a far stronger system of accountability across the criminal justice system. For more information >> [Crime abroad](#)

Police powers and gangs

In February 2009, the Centre for Social Justice published *Dying to Belong: An In-depth Review of Street Gangs in Britain*. The report recommends that tough new control orders, Gang Activity Desistance Orders (GADOs), aimed at breaking up violent teenage gangs are introduced. GADOs would be aimed at gang leaders and backed by serious penalties, possibly imprisonment.

For more information >> [Dying to Belong](#)

Home Office knife crime website

At the beginning of this year, the Home Office launched a website as part of its national youth anti-knife crime campaign It Doesn't Have to Happen. It provides tools, materials and toolkits for those tackling knife crime aimed at stakeholders and young people. Hard copies and electronic versions are available via the website. Stakeholders can also subscribe to the campaigns e-newsletter.

For more information >> [Knife crime website](#)

Streetwise - Crime prevention resource

Streetwise is a crime prevention resource which aims to educate children and young people about the dangers of gun, gang, and knife culture. The resource consists of 6 educational manuals, with lesson/session plans for practitioners working with young people aged 10 to 21 years old.

For more information >> [Streetwise](#)

General

Long-term impact of overseas expeditions

In February 2009, Raleigh and ippr published a report examining the long-term impact of overseas expedition experiences on 100 former Raleigh 'venturers' who had been on expeditions between five and 20 years ago. The group included young people who had experienced unemployment, homelessness, drug and alcohol problems, mental illness and violence. 94% of respondents reported that their confidence in their own abilities increased as a result of Raleigh and 83% said that it increased their career aspirations.

For more information >> [Overseas expeditions](#)

Small organisations report

In February 2009, Children England published a report on small children's organisations in the voluntary and community sector. The report, *Small Change?*, finds that four out of ten small children's charities are in a vulnerable funding position and may have to close. The report draws on a survey of 125 small children's charities with an annual income of under £250,000 and finds that children, young people and their families may lose out on vital services due to a lack of funding and support.

For more information >> [Small Change](#)

A Good Childhood report

In February 2009, as part of its inquiry launched in 2006, the Children's Society published its report *A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age*, saying that children's lives have become more difficult than in the past due to excessive individualism. The inquiry also found that increased exposure to TV and Internet increases materialistic desires and reduces mental health. The report's recommendations and summaries from the report are available online.

For more information >> [Good Childhood report](#)

This bulletin is prepared by Ilona Pinter under the Speaking Out project, which is a partnership between Children England (formerly the National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations) and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS). As a strategic partner funded by the Office of the Third Sector, Cabinet Office, the project seeks to build a voice for the children and young people's voluntary and community sector across Government.

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