

Youth Matters

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 4
November 2005

Your comments must reach us by that date.

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education and skills

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The information you send to us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Department for Education and Skills and/or published in a summary of responses received in response to this consultation. We will assume that you are content for us to do this, and that if you are replying by e-mail, your consent overrides any confidentiality disclaimer that is generated by your organisation's IT system, unless you specifically include a request to the contrary in the main text of your submission to us.

The Department may, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, make available on public request, individual consultation responses. This will extend to your comments unless you inform us that you wish them to remain confidential.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

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If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact:

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Which of the following best describes you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Young Person (under 13)
<input type="checkbox"/> Young Person (13-16)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young Person (17-19)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young Person (other) Please Specify in the box below
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional working with young people	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer working with young people	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify in the box below

Please Specify:

Youth Music is a UK-wide charity set up in 1999 to provide high quality and diverse music-making opportunities for 0-18 year olds. It targets young people living in areas of social and economic need who might otherwise lack opportunity and predominantly supports activities which are held outside school hours.

If you work with young people, which best describes the organisation you work in:

<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Youth Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Connexions Service
<input type="checkbox"/> School	<input type="checkbox"/> Further or higher education institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Private or voluntary & community sector youth work organisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Private sector information and advice organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other voluntary & community sector organisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

Please Specify:

Charity

General

1 a) What do you think are the most important issues facing young people now?

Youth Music's funded activity is directly influenced by the views of young people. In order to respond to this Green Paper, Youth Music therefore consulted with a cross section of young people aged 12 –20+ from diverse backgrounds in focus groups around the country. Their views are directly represented (indicated Young people) throughout, and their main conclusions are listed on page 39.

Comments:

Young people

- They felt that this was dependent on the way you had been brought up, your support at home and the opportunities that were offered to you. Issues that were raised were:
- Fear of crime predominantly as a victim
- Being labelled as a 'problem' to deal with
- Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs – often used to frighten young people “you can get an ASBO for just hanging around in the park”.)
- Young consultees in foster care said they had concerns about where they were placed and that they didn't have enough advice or support.
- Some young people consulted who had left youth offending institutions felt opportunities were limited for them and didn't feel they had enough support to examine their options.

1 b) How are these issues different for younger (13-16) compared to older (17-19) teenagers?

Comments:

Young people

- They generally recognised that older teenagers would have different issues: “I (13-16 age range) can see that my sister (17-19 age range) is more concerned about things that don’t affect me.”
- A big issue for the older consultees was the lack of advice or education on ‘life skills’ such as how to manage money, buying a house, relationships. They often felt pressurised by companies trying to sell them goods such as credit cards and felt that these companies should be more responsible as misuse could lead to serious debt.
- The younger consultees said bullying was still a big issue both in and outside school and they had little confidence that the school could do much about it and felt it was “something you had to live with”. Bullying was also linked to peer pressure to get involved with risk taking behaviour such as drinking, smoking and drugs, which was another big issue for them.

2 Are there issues faced by particular groups of teenagers that are not addressed in this document? If so, what are they?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- Whilst the Green paper is comprehensive in terms of the main issues faced, it is clear from our consultation with young people that particular efforts need to be made to reach and make a sustained commitment to those with least access (for whatever reason) in order to ensure key issues they face are adequately addressed.

3 Do you know of any projects or initiatives which have been outstandingly successful in tackling the challenges covered in this document? If so, please give details.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

Youth Music

- The voluntary and community sector should play a significant role in the new proposals. There should be a mechanism for the sharing of good practice between the voluntary/community sector and the public sector in the 4 key challenges listed in the paper. Youth Music has funded many projects/initiatives which provide examples of successfully tackling these challenges. An example relating to three of the challenges is given below.
- **Empowerment through positive activities - Plug Into Music - Chicken Shed Theatre Company, London** - Chicken Shed Theatre Company aims to advance education through the performing arts for the benefit of all including, but not limited to, those who may require help with mobility, communication, behaviour, self-help skills or with social development. The aim of the project was to create a new youth band and youth choir through after school music workshops.
- A quote from their final report - "As a group the young people have gained amazing confidence in their abilities as musicians. For the overwhelming majority of the participants this type of activity was new to them. Finding new enjoyment and new skills in a supportive learning environment was a hugely empowering and positive experience for the group. The thrill of the positive feedback that they received from public performances reinforced their enjoyment and boosted their self-esteem."
- Youth Music receives a full final report on completion of each project funded. 83% of all final reports to date cite empowerment or increased self esteem/confidence as significant positive outcomes.
- **Making a contribution as citizens - MZONE is the Youth Music Action Zone on Merseyside** - MZONE's highly successful Young Ambassador's Programme gives young people a voice in the development of music-making activity where they live. They are involved in a range of activities, most of which are directed by them and aim to benefit their peers and the community more widely. They have taken personal responsibility and shown a great deal of genuine concern for caring for the community in which they live.

- The Young Ambassadors have developed their own five-point charter which guides what they do. This includes consulting their peers, promoting MZONE and its activities to other young people (actively recruiting new “hard to reach” participants), lobbying local councillors and other decision makers within the region for support, networking with young people in Youth Music Action Zones in other parts of the country. Their commitment to their charter and active citizenship were the driving force behind the organisation of the young people’s conference.
- The ambassadors meet fortnightly to develop a range of initiatives such as the DryBar - young promoters have a say on how the DryBar should be programmed, delivered and promoted.
- MZONE Young Ambassadors were central to the delivery of the recent MZONE Youth Music Conference. The aim of the MZONE Youth Music conference was to appeal to young people to celebrate MZONE activities, participate in community music workshops, engage in a Q&A session with music industry and the broader creative arts industry professionals who originated from, live and work on Merseyside.
- **Support for targeted, specific groups of hard to reach young people - Partnership Programme - Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership (OYAP), Reaching the Parts** - Reaching the Parts (RTP) is a music making project targeted at young people, aged 12-18, who are existing offenders or at risk of offending, the young unemployed, young people who use drugs or are outside the school system, in isolated rural areas, have physical and learning disabilities, are in the 'Looked After' system or are from minority ethnic communities.
- RTP is run by OYAP – a partnership specifically set up to coordinate services in a local area. OYAP aims to further the artistic development, experience and awareness of young people in Oxfordshire. OYAP provides training for young people to run their own arts projects, delivers various projects from music technology, to video, creative writing and youth theatre. It also provides advocacy and advice to other non-arts agencies, such as the Youth Offending Team, Social Services and the Youth Service.

4 a) How can we encourage young people to take their responsibilities seriously?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Encourage young people to take their responsibilities seriously by giving them tasks that are meaningful, have value for them and are driven essentially by the motivation of the young people themselves.
- For example Youth Music encourages traineeships. A good example of this is the story of Karl – a young boy who first became came into contact with music through Whitewood & Fleming Theatre and Music group in Halifax at the tender age of 12 where he started to play percussion in the local community band. From there, he developed an interested in technology, studio techniques, recording, and pc's and when the Youth Music project, MusicMakers came along, Whitewood & Fleming employed Karl as a MusicMakers Trainee. For two years, filled with enthusiasm, excitement and highly motivated, he ran sessions with the MusicMakers team, teaching younger ones kit drumming, as well as expanding and developing his own technology skills. When MusicMakers came to a close, Karl aged 18, had become a valued member of the Whitewood & Fleming team with more knowledge of studio than anyone else. The experience that Karl got through MusicMakers led him to a part time job at his old high school in the technical/pc department. The school recognised the value of Karl's work and the level of expertise he brought to the school – he was promoted to Deputy Head of IT - a full time, permanent job. This case study demonstrates that Youth Music is committed to helping young people to achieve their full potential, take leadership and responsibility seriously and give them a chance to make a career out of something they love and which motivates them.
- We specifically need to encourage leadership among young people, consult them widely ensuring meaningful follow up action, manage their expectations and respect their views. Special efforts need to be made to include those recognised as “hard to reach” – commitment to such young people needs to be sustained if it is to be meaningful.
- We need to provide them with opportunities for taking responsibilities, with guidance/support made available – e.g. as a sounding board for their decision making and risk taking. Responsibilities are likely to be taken seriously if the desired outcome is clearly stated, time limited, will make a definable difference and is generated (wholly or partly) by young people themselves.

Young people

- They recognised they had responsibilities for themselves, their families.

school and friends and that they took these seriously. One young person described his experience: John (name has been changed) has recently come out of a youth offending institution. He has had to work hard to take on his responsibilities such as living alone, cooking, cleaning, rent and bills and finding and keeping a job. He said that he recognised that having a criminal record could go against him finding a job, so being able to keep one is an achievement and should be taken seriously. He said the support from his key worker has helped him to turn his life around.

4 b) What should the incentives be for good behaviour?

Comments:

Youth Music

- This question needs more careful consideration.
- We need to look at what 'good' means and how it can be measured.
- Research has shown that young people from less stable backgrounds need more help and support than others.
- We need to understand the circumstances of young people and provide activities for them that they can relate to. This is one of the core values of Youth Music.
- It is also important to monitor their progress and offer assistance when necessary.

Young people

- Interesting and attractive activities such as sports (boxing, football, snooker), arts (dancing, drama, music) and informal activities (cinema, ice-skating and fashion design) would be a way of diverting young people away from risk taking behaviour and be an incentive, but these needed to be marketed effectively as well as being accessible, high quality and free. A strong theme across the consultation was that where there are activities going on, they are sometimes low quality or not marketed appropriately, therefore of no interest to young people and not an incentive for good behaviour.
- They also felt that safe places for them to 'chill out' with their friends would help and be an incentive. Good youth clubs were popular amongst one group of consultees.
- Many said that a major incentive for good behaviour was recognition for what they did well.

4 c) What sanctions should be applied for poor and disruptive behaviour?

Comments:

Young people

- This question brought up some strong feelings among all the young people we consulted. They flagged up that whoever administered the sanctions would need to know what constitutes poor and disruptive behaviour. There were many stories of young people who felt they had been treated unjustly by the police: 'we were told to move but we were just hanging out in the park', 'I got an official warning for putting up my hood', 'I've been stopped and searched four times in the last month', 'I was stopped while I was jogging – they thought I was a burglar'. Therefore, if there were sanctions then there must be clear transparent guidelines for all parties which identified what constitutes bad behaviour.
- The young people felt that anti-social behaviour orders were used as a threat, but only served to scare some young people who were not clear of what behaviour warrants one, or were used as badge of honour by others.
- There were mixed views about the role of parents. Some felt parents were responsible for young people's bad behaviour and suggested they needed support with parenting schemes to help them to bring up their children. Some felt agencies for young people should be in contact with families from a much earlier stage in children's lives so that if something did happen there was a support network for them. Others believed it did not have anything to do with parenting – some young people would always behave badly and it was their own responsibility:
- 'I (now aged 18) went through a year when I stole all the time, did drugs, slept on the streets, left home for two weeks, screwed up my GCSEs – nothing stopped me. I decided to change my life around, but only after I went home and my parents left me alone and let me do what I wanted.' [This young person said that they had originally rebelled against their parents because they were not allowed to do what they wanted. By agreeing to go home, the parents relented and let the young person take the lead in making decisions about what they wanted to do.]
- The government's suggestion of taking away the opportunity card from young people who 'misbehave or commit crimes' was not popular. They argued that some would see it as kudos to have your card taken away, others would just steal someone else's. Also it was not enough of a threat to guarantee any change in behaviour.

4 d) Do you know of any examples of schemes which have applied these kinds of incentives and sanctions effectively?

Comments:

Yes - Many of the young people we consulted had been involved with music through the work of Youth Music. Some examples are:

- CRE8 was a Youth Music project where one girl said she learned different styles of music and how to work with young people from different backgrounds. The incentives behind the project were to give young people the chance to work with professional musicians and technicians, learn new skills (technical, social and interpersonal) and enhance their knowledge of music styles as well as give them the chance to write their own song that reflects their personal views. For this girl these incentives were all real new opportunities and viewed by her as special, valuable and motivating.
- One young person had been involved with a Youth Music Action Zone (YMAZ) since its' beginning. He has learned how to play guitar and DJ and has received certificates, which he appreciated. His continuing commitment to participate in YMAZ activities counted in his favour in a court case he had to go through. He acknowledges that he has anger management issues and says music is the only thing that calms him down and helps him. He is now living in supported lodging and working as a builder and thinks his involvement in music has helped him to achieve this. Music and getting involved with activities within the YMAZ were incentives to help this young person focus and channel his energy and anger in a positive way. Without music making activities and the support of the YMAZ, this young person felt that he would have ended up with nothing.

5 What more could be done to divert young people from risk-taking behaviour, like smoking, binge-drinking and volatile substance and illicit drugs misuse?

Comments:

Youth Music

- More information needs to be available to young people regarding the risks and effect this behaviour has on young people's lives even in the short-term.
- There is always an element of free will in the choices that young people make. However, if we seek to support young people in a better and more improved fashion, they need information, advice and guidance from appropriately trained people to whom they can easily relate and in environments where they are socially relaxed.
- Whilst it is not a panacea, providing more opportunities for positive activity that motivates and which young people value, with targeted progression routes (and in-built rewards that provide kudos) tends to divert from the negative behaviour. Such opportunities, albeit organised along social lines, should provide structure, discipline and risk taking as part of developing a positive attitude to responsibility.

Young people

- They felt that nothing that could be done to divert young people from poor and disruptive behaviour. This was part of growing up and experimenting, but they did recognise that young people could be prevented from taking this to extremes.
- To prevent risk-taking behaviour, young people need to be educated about the consequences at a much earlier age, but parents should also be educated.
- They felt strongly that the media had a big role to play in influencing young people. The way that adverts and television programmes particularly encourage drinking needs to be addressed by the government and they believed the media could be used positively to show young people what the impact of this kind of behaviour is and to educate them more.
- Many of the young people said that shop owners and landlords sold tobacco and alcohol to young people too easily. They felt the government needed to take responsibility and do something about this situation.
- Another popular idea was a buddy/mentor who could point out the risks and the consequences of risk taking behaviour as well as safe places for them

to 'chill out' with their friends.

6 What practical benefits and challenges will there be in developing an integrated youth support service?

Comments:

Youth Music

- An integrated youth service, if managed, coordinated and financed properly, and advertised correctly, will help ensure that all young people from different backgrounds and cultural communities have access to the support network they need, no matter what part of the country there are in.
- A 'properly resourced' youth centre might look like a Sure Start Children's Centre for teenagers. It would need to be open (physically and 'online') when young people need it would provide PSHE, education and career advice, be a place to chill out where you could buy good coffee, tea, soft drinks and food and be able to rely on it. A feature could also be mentoring schemes involving adult volunteers mentoring young people and older teenagers mentoring younger ones. See the work of Friends United Network [FUN], Studio 442, Highgate Studios, Highgate Road, London NW5 1TL.

7 How can the Connexions brand be used to best effect within the reformed system?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Connexions is well known to most young people but needs to be of consistent high quality, relevance and sound management across the country.

8 What more can we do to ensure that reformed services are focused on achieving the improved outcomes we all want to see?

Comments:

Youth Music

- We need to see more partnership working across the youth sector. Partnership working is challenging. For young people's organisations it is essential. Young people have many needs which cannot be served or addressed by one organisation alone. Building partnerships, making referrals relevant and useful, guaranteeing joined-up thinking and action is a crucial element for the success of Youth Matters. Young people believe adults when systems work and when the support they get is relevant to their needs. Government leadership on matters concerning partnerships would, in part, ensure the success of Youth Matters. Youth Music Action Zones are considered to demonstrate an effective model of partnerships.
- Effective partnerships need to be brokered and given specific support especially at the early stages of developing as a partnership. Agreeing outcomes and allocating responsibilities within partnerships can be tricky. Using someone who's objective though knowledgeable, can really assist this brokerage process. Partnerships often thrive best and work effectively to their outcomes if opportunities for networking/showing practice with other similar partnerships are facilitated. Partnerships should be encouraged to keep their practice under review and make adjustments if necessary.
- A practical suggestion is to set up a national youth website that could be accessed by all. The site would contain information on every service available to young people in their area as well as information on what activities there are to do and where to look for help if necessary. The website would not replace the need for partnership working but be the living proof of its effect.

Chapter 3

Empowering Young People: Things to do and Places to go

9 a) What do you think of the emphasis in the proposals on empowering young people themselves to shape local services?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
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Comments:

Youth Music

- This is, in principle, a good plan. However, the practicalities need examination.
- Will the areas of decision making be ring-fenced to young people's issues?
- How will young people be able to access the forum for debate? Will they be elected? How should we ensure that the most motivated politically do not dominate the process? This is especially important for young people who do not commonly have a voice or whose views are not considered.

9 b) What options are there for achieving this?

Comments:

Young people

- We asked how they would like to help shape the services and activities provided for them. They were encouraged to tick as many of the options below as they liked. The percentages indicate the popularity of each option.
 - a) take part in an inspection of how good activities and services are
54% chose this option
 - b) help decide how your local council spends money on providing activities
57% chose this option
 - c) have a say in the types of activities that are available for young people in the area
63% chose this option
 - d) don't think young people should get involved in these kind of

decisions
4% chose this option

- All were enthusiastic about having the opportunity to express their views on how to improve facilities for young people in their local areas. They would like to assess the quality of activities in their local area, but are unclear how the inspection would work and what would happen to the information. They also felt strongly that if they did give their views, it would only work if adults listened seriously to what they had to say.
- One young person described his positive experience of getting involved with the redesign of his local youth club. They were creating a brand new building and young people from 7-19yrs were asked their opinion about how it should look and what it should contain. They gave their views to architects about the building's structure and also decided what activities it should provide.
- Nearly all the young people we consulted believed that meeting representatives who were responsible for providing and delivering services for young people face to face was the most powerful way to get their message across and be heard.
- Other ideas they suggested included:
 - a youth board which then consults other young people about services in their area
 - invite councillors and officers to youth centres where young people could ask them questions about services in a place where they felt comfortable
 - a young people's champion could sit on council meetings and put forward their concerns
 - dance/drama role play to get their message across
 - younger children should also be asked their views as well

10 a) What should be done centrally to support the development and delivery of local opportunity cards?

Comments:

Youth Music

- It is vital that the opportunity card is developed and managed well both centrally and locally so that it works from the start and young people know how to access it, where to get information on it and what it can be used for.
- The opportunity card should be linked both to the school curriculum and through local services and businesses that are currently available to young people.
- The new system, if it is to work centrally and be delivered on time, needs to use effective technology.

Young people

- There were mixed feelings about the opportunity card amongst the consultees. Most liked the idea of having a card which gave you discounts on activities and they said this would encourage them to take up more opportunities, but it could also bring new problems. Many saw it as another item that could be stolen from them, used to bully people and commit fraud. They wanted to be assured that no one else could use their card but they were not hopeful that this could be achieved.
- The young people consulted had many queries about the card's implementation, such as: would all organisations that run activities buy into the scheme? Would the card be nationally recognised so that young people could participate in activities all over the country? Some activities cost more than others, would this be reflected in the discounts given? Could it be linked to a library card or Connexions card?
- They also had ideas about how it could be used. They felt it was important that young people were involved in the design of the card and its use. They suggested a directory of services sent in the post as well as on the internet would be useful. The card could have a pin number and be topped up at banks, post offices and shops. You could also check your balance at these places. As well as activities it could be used at informal venues such as the leisure centre, ice-skating rink, cinema, bowling alley and for driving lessons. Finally they suggested it should be piloted and monitored closely by young people.

10 b) How should opportunity cards be developed so that the maximum number of young people can benefit?

Comments:

Youth Music

- A national youth website (see above) could act as the main central contact point for opportunity cards.
- The site could be used as a log in for all those issued with the card and have links to all Local Authorities across the country.
- Most young people know how to access the web and this would appeal across a wide spectrum of young people and therefore encourage maximum numbers of young people to participate.
- The website could be like a bank account. You could review opportunities and competitions and collect credits and spend on line. A model would be 'air miles' as used by major airlines like BA and KLM/Air France.
- Another way to alert young people to the card would be through adults visiting schools, youth clubs and afterschool clubs and tell them about the card face to face.
- It would be vital to make sure that the card was properly marketed and advertised across the country, but the advertising would need to appeal to young people and possibly devised by young people to attract as many of their peers as possible. Include advertising 'online' and via mobile phones.
- The card would have to have value and not just be a symbol. It would have to be replaceable. Young people should be urged to care for their card but not penalised if they mislay it.

11 a) Which activities do you think have the most benefits for young people?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Activities that help young people collaborate and share resources. All young people should be provided with access to activities of choice. Development of talent and commitment are dependent on access to information and facilities.
- Sports and arts are natural media for young people to grow and develop through. Both contain elements of challenge and excitement. Government should ensure that sports and arts are always mentioned together and are seen as complementary.
- The nurturing of the mind, body and spirit can be achieved by a combination of sports and arts.

Young people

- The young people who participated in the consultation thought that activities which most benefit young people are those which are free, accessible, are high quality, have value in the outside world in terms of work and society, provide you with life skills and have progression routes for learning. They also wanted activities where their achievements could be celebrated and recognised.

11 b) Do the proposed national standards on activities cover the right areas?

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- National standards are relevant only when the structure of support for young people is in place. National standards cannot be put in place in a piecemeal way.
- National standards must be linked to high ambitions for the Youth Matters project.

11 c) Are they achievable and affordable within existing resources?

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- Young people are the future of the UK. National and regional resources are already committed to their care and nurture. These resources need reviewing. It is likely that they will need considerable enhancement.
- A value for money review of youth services should be undertaken prior to a Youth Matters strategy being implemented. A realistic medium-term budget should be committed to the national project. Government should not force statutory and voluntary organisations into delivering quick wins, but create a robust, lasting structure to support growing children and young people.

Chapter 4

Young People as Citizens: Making a Contribution

12 Will our proposals, taken together with those of the Russell Commission, lead to increased mutual respect between young people and others in the community?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- Developing increased mutual respect between young people and others in their community is a challenge. 'Respect' grows out of listening, talking and sharing.
- Whether or not the proposals outlined in the Green Paper will lead to mutual respect will depend on how the proposals are constructed and delivered locally and how young people are enabled to cross community boundaries, to meet, work and play with people whose background is not the same as their own.

13 What more can we do to recognise and celebrate young people's positive contributions to their communities?

Comments

Youth Music

- Ways of celebrating and recognising the achievements of young people from diverse communities must be explored. One message from all our young consultees was that praise and acknowledgement of achievements mean a lot. For isolated and marginalised communities this is even more important. An example of recent successes in this area is the recognition of Yop Kippur, Eid, Divali and other religious festivals in schools.
- More profile should be given to celebrating what young people achieve voluntarily in their own time, whether achieved outside of or during the school day.
- All communities need to feel valued. Young people whose culture is marginalised may well end up on the margins or suppress their culture in order to fit in.

14 Would the opportunity to earn rewards motivate young people to get involved in their communities?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Young people

- The opportunity to earn rewards would motivate them to get more involved in their communities.
- During the consultation, the young people were given a set of options concerning the type of reward they would like. They were encouraged to choose from a range of options. The percentages indicate the popularity of each option.
 - (a) an award or certificate
63% chose this option
 - (b) things like CDs or ringtones
53% chose this option

(c) extra top ups on your card to spend on activities
53% chose this option

(d) the chance to win the opportunity to go to big events or meet
important people
59% chose this option

- Although not all of the young people opted for an award or certificate as a means of reward, they emphasised the importance of gaining something of value that they could use as part of their curriculum vitae. Some suggested linking into other award schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh to give the award value.
- Young people felt that the work they did in the community should be recognised and celebrated locally, for example through the local newspaper, and by their peers.
- However, one group felt that giving rewards for volunteering was giving out the wrong message. The reward for volunteering was the feeling that you get when you have helped someone or contributed something to your community. It should not be done in order to get something in return.

15 How can we ensure that young people from the diverse range of communities that make up today's society are effectively engaged by service providers?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Youth Music seeks to ensure that opportunities are made as widely accessible as possible and, in particular, are available to those young people whose access to such opportunities have been/are limited or denied because of disadvantage or underprivilege. Special efforts (often working cross-sector and cross-agency) are often needed to benefit the 'hard to reach'. Sustained opportunities (at least five year commitment) with progression routes are needed – then ensure success stories get high profile media coverage (drip-fed not one off).

Young people

- The young people from these communities should be asked themselves and that service provision should be accessible for all and that young people from disadvantaged groups should be supported to take up provision.
- The young people identified that services need to find a range of methods for communicating with them, and they need to improve their relationships with schools.
- Most of the young people, highlighted that good transport links were an essential means of accessing services. They also suggested outreach to different communities, activities delivered in different languages, an accessible database for disabled young people, the opportunity card in Braille, a special advisor to ensure young people from diverse communities are engaged, and mentoring to support those young people.

Chapter 5

Supporting Choices: Information, Advice and Guidance

16 What kind of help and support is most important for young people?

Comments:

Youth Music

- It is important that young people are supported throughout their lives and have access to support in whatever areas they need.
- A national youth website would be one way forward of offering the support that young people need.
- There is no one kind of support that young people need all the time. If we can offer access to support whenever they need it, this will allow them to make the right choices at the right time. For example, support when they make the transition from primary to secondary school is important as well as support and advice when they are choosing their GCSE or A-Level options.

Young people

- Although information, help and advice was offered to young people it was up to them to seek it out, rather than services ensuring they received it.
- Some of the consultees had been offered a session with a Connexions advisor but it wasn't compulsory – which they would have preferred.
- However, they felt that when they did receive advice, it was of low quality.
- There were mixed views about advice within school and Connexions: 'It's only offered to difficult young people', 'I get on with my Connexions worker – I've had good advice.' Some said they would prefer a key worker they could trust outside the school setting, while others said school should ensure it takes place.
- They received information, help and advice from parents, Connexions workers, youth workers, school, the internet and friends. It varied in quality and they felt that it needs to be consistent and of high quality to ensure they take up the service.
- Many felt that sex education in schools was inadequate and started too late. Again, they highlighted that they wanted advice on life skills such as forming relationships, financial management and buying a house.

17 How can we ensure that information, advice and guidance provided to young people is comprehensive, impartial and challenges rather than perpetuates traditional stereotypes?

Comments:

Youth Music

- It is important to consult with and listen to young people and ask them what advice they want, how they want to receive it and when – take account of young people’s views, incorporating them as appropriate. The range of advice also needs to be consistent across the regions as young people do not, necessarily, stay in the same place. This would ensure that the range of advice, information and support given to young people would be the same, no matter where they lived.

Young people

- They also felt that they were often asked to make decisions about their careers and education at an early age, which was difficult to do. They thought there should be more recognition that they are likely to change their minds by the time they go to college and that this should be accommodated.

18 What do you think of our proposals to devolve responsibility for information, advice and guidance to children's trusts, schools and colleges?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- The proposals are a good idea but it is important to have the right resources to co-ordinate this responsibility effectively and make it work.
- Ideas are great but there needs to be the money available to develop the schemes and train good leaders to run them effectively.
- The fact that there needs to be both national and regional structures to guarantee Youth Matters is not in question. How they operate is another matter. The maxim 'Think globally, act locally' works well here. We must acknowledge that, like communities the needs and wants of young people vary hugely.
- No matter the structure [Children's Trusts, schools and colleges] new thinking and practice must take hold. Dead resources – e.g. schools closed in the holidays – need liberating. Where 'can't do' culture still prevails, this must be replaced with a 'why not?' culture. It's what young people expect. We aim to build energetic, healthy, well educated future generations. This cannot be done on the ruins of a lethargic and half-hearted commitment in the past.

19 a) Do you agree that it is important to have minimum expectations of the information, advice and guidance received by young people?

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- It is important that all young people have access to good services and opportunities as they grow up.
- All young people, no matter what their background, should have access to a youth worker, a good careers advisor and the opportunity card.
- Information 'injections' at 12 [Year 7], again at 14. [Year 9] and again at 16 [Year 11]. All three 'injections' should be complementary. This would, for instance, provide a chance to re-engage with a young person who had slid off the rails by 14.
- This programme could be part of a national scheme to support young people. If the opportunity card is issued in Year 7, at each following 'check up' some bonus credits could be awarded for achieving a successful passage.

19 b) Are the proposed expectations correct for each age group?

Yes No Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- A very difficult question to answer.
- There are undoubtedly different expectations from each group of young people and it is highly likely that you will not please every young person or age group in the country.
- The minimum expectations that are proposed would help young people as they progress through their teenage years, but not all young people have the same problems so defining what the minimum expectations are would be difficult.

20 a) Do you agree there is a case for quality standards for information, advice and guidance? If so, what should they cover?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

Youth Music

- There is a need for quality standards. These however, should not be a confusing mixture of bureaucracy and education-speak. They should be able to be understood by the young people they aim to serve.
- The quality standards should be written by young people. See the National Youth Arts Awards which were structured by consultation with young people.

20 b) How can they be made affordable without putting pressure on financial or workforce resources?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Not very much is achieved without resources. If Government's commitment to Youth Matters has meaning, then systems to ensure that the structure and programme have meaning, value and serve young people, resources must be found to ensure standards.
- It is important that quality standards are met and supported by a good financial package and well thought through resources.
- You need to make sure that quality standards are developed by well informed people. It could work well with volunteers if they had the right training and were led by people who are good managers and leaders.

21 Would quality awards for IAG help to ensure high quality and impartiality?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- Keep the process clear, simple and understandable.
- National quality standards and awards are more often than not shrouded in confusing language and arcane operating systems.
- Youth Matters should aim to address the service at young people and therefore involve them in a system of guaranteeing quality IAG

22 Do you think a 'personal health MoT' for 12-13 year olds would be an effective way of helping young people make a successful transition to the teenage years and to secondary education?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- MoT's would be appropriate at 12, 14 and 16. PSHE information is crucial to the whole age range. Your knowledge and experience is different at 14 and 16. Information provided should be direct and clear. Advice on sex and relationships and sexual orientation should be especially clear
- Personal health MoT's should be available to all young people and not only as an effective way of helping them through the transition to the teenage years and secondary education.
- A personal MoT should include information, advice and guidance on sex, careers, drink and drugs, home life, dealing with bullies, etc etc.

Chapter 6

All Young People Achieving: Reforming Targeted Support

23 Do you think there is a good case for bringing together within children's trusts responsibility for commissioning different services which provide support to young people with additional needs?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Youth Music

- Please refer back to previous questions 21 and 22.
- We need to keep the process simple.

24 How can we ensure that young people facing particular barriers, for example those who are disabled, are effectively engaged by service providers?

Comments:

Youth Music

- There needs to be quality standards and regulations that are adhered to across all organisations. These standards and regulations need to be coherent from one service provider to another and from one local area to another and incorporate advice/guidance regarding engaging young people facing particular barriers.
- There should not be different standards and regulations – all should abide by the same no matter what part of the country a young person or service is in.

25 How can we ensure that the new lead professional role is successful in co-ordinating the delivery of targeted support to young people who need it?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Whoever will be the lead professional in co-ordinating the delivery of targeted support to young people needs to have a team working with them that is fully briefed on the issues that young people face and the support they need.
- The lead professional should also meet and talk to as many young people as they can, from as many different backgrounds as possible. This would help them understand exactly what issues are important to young people and it would help young people believe that someone in government does want to help them and listen to them. Consultation with young people should be an ongoing process, not a 'one off'.
- Whoever will be the lead professional, they will need to have the ability to conceive a system and operate it for the benefit of young people. This needs to be someone who is skilled at a high level but can communicate with young people from a wide variety of cultures. They need to be inspiring and tenacious, practical yet ambitious.

26 What more could be done to help older teenagers make a smooth transition to support from adult services, where they need them?

Comments:

Youth Music

- No matter how good the initial support system may be, there will always be a need for special support for older teenagers and young adults.
- An effective method of highlighting those with needs is to target all 16 year-olds who leave school without qualifications. Their prospects are usually low and they will most commonly need extra support. We should not wait until this group is in its early 20s to offer support and guidance. The system needs to attract this group and not make them feel that they are inadequate.
- Assuming that some older teenagers will continue to need support in their adult life, they should have access to as many training, educational opportunities as possible.

- If older teenagers have received all the information, advice and guidance that they needed, when they needed it as they grew up, then they should be able to make a smooth transition to adulthood.

Parents

27 At what stage(s) of their children's lives would parents find it most helpful to receive information about how they can support their teenage children?

Comments:

Youth Music

Having spoken to a small group of parents they would find it helpful to receive information at the following stages:

- Transition from primary to secondary school
- Pre-teens [mainly Year 7]
- On an ongoing basis throughout their teenage years

28 a) On which issues would parents of teenagers most like support?

Comments:

Youth Music

- Health issues – sleeping, eating, drinking, taking drugs, sex
- Truancy, bullying, safety
- Issues relating to self confidence and self worth, peer pressure, discipline
- Planning for independence and understanding what constitutes normal teen behaviour and what is something more serious such as depression.
- Career/academic options and processes re post 16 and other education choices
- Possible advice on out of school hours activities that would complement young people's learning
- Exam stress

28 b) How, or through whom should information be delivered?

Comments:

Youth Music

Parents felt information should be delivered by several means:

- Schools and colleges
- Parents groups
- Advice surgeries
- Community groups
- Libraries
- Television and other media – factual documentaries, articles within magazines and slots on local radio
- Youth Clubs

- Websites – possibly a dedicated site similar to NHS Direct
- Parents' evenings
- Telephone helpline
- Workshops
- Through a neutral individual, role model, or someone young people can relate to, in an environment which is familiar to them and that they can trust.

29 How could schools help parents remain involved with their teenagers' learning and future education opportunities?

Comments:

Youth Music

The parents with whom we spoke thought:

- Secondary schools should allow parents into the classroom to learn alongside, mentor and help their teenagers' – especially boys
- Train parents as learning mentors and support them as they support their children through the teenage years.
- By opening up schools, colleges and universities more to the community
- Honest and frequent interchanges between parents, young people and schools
- Consult parents more and work more closely with them.

Other

30 Do you have any other general comments?

Comments:

About Youth Music:

One of the National Lottery's great success stories, Youth Music was set up in 1999, with a remit to support music-making activities for some of the UK's most disadvantaged young people. Since then, Youth Music has gone on to reach over one million children and young people, encouraging their talents, building their confidence and transforming the landscape of musical opportunity throughout the UK. The music-making supported is of the widest variety, from hip-hop and dj-ing to classical and jazz.

The organisation has championed and demonstrated the importance of music-making for children and young people over the last five years. Opportunities to get involved in music which were once widely accessible through the formal education sector are now much harder for some children to access. Youth Music plays a crucial role in filling this gap.

Youth Music occupies a unique position – distributing £10m per year of Lottery funding on behalf of Arts Council England. Despite its success, Youth Music aspires to reach out to ever increasing numbers of young people across the country. The vision is to create a sustainable environment to channel young peoples' creativity, enabling them to express themselves and develop their skills through music. The aim is to reach 3 million young people by 2010.

Access - For those with least opportunity

Breadth - Music of all styles and all cultures

Coverage - Rural, urban, coastal and UK-wide

Development - music leaders getting better at what they do

Quality - Encouraging high standards for all

About the consultation with young people:

As a provider of musical opportunities to young people, Youth Music's response to the paper expresses the view of the organisation and of the young people in receipt of services it funds and delivers.

In order to consult with young people from a range of Youth Music programmes, three areas were targeted: Birmingham, Norwich and Thanet. This gave a cross section of young people from a city, rural area and those living by the sea. Forty six young people participated in three focus groups. Two thirds of them had attended Youth Music programmes. See Appendix 1 for a breakdown of ethnicity, age, gender and disability.

The questions used for the focus groups were taken from the Youth Matters Consultation Response form and the Teenage Response form and felt to be the most pertinent for the purposes of the consultation. The young people welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the government's consultation exercise on Youth Matters. They were enthusiastic about sharing their opinions on the proposals and were pleased that their views were being heard.

Main conclusions:

The young people really engaged with the consultation and were very willing to explore the proposals set out in Youth Matters. They agreed with some of these proposals but flagged up some key concerns for the government to consider. They also made recommendations to ensure young people received the high quality services they deserved. The main conclusions are:

- young people have a great deal to contribute to society, especially through activities which they are highly motivated, and this needs to be recognised rather than seeing young people as a 'problem' that needs to be sorted out
- the government has to acknowledge and act on the part the media plays and that of companies selling tobacco and alcohol to young people when considering how to divert young people from risk-taking behaviour
- activities need to be well resourced, of high quality, marketed effectively and delivered by people who really understand how to work with young people if they are going to attract them
- the implementation of the opportunity card needs to take account of security (card theft, fraud and bullying), being divisive (top ups by parents or government) and providing choice (offering formal and non-formal activities), and needs to be designed in consultation with young people
- there needs to be much clearer guidelines on what constitutes bad behaviour which all parties understand. They felt sanctions are less productive in reducing anti-social behaviour than support, understanding and providing something meaningful to do
- they are happy to volunteer in their community but felt that recognition in their local area and a meaningful award are essential incentives
- young people want to be involved in having their say to the council on local services and determine what should be available to them. But they would also like to be consulted on decisions which affect the future of society as a whole
- these young people want high quality advice, help and information at regular times throughout their teenage lives with people they can trust

Appendix 1: Constituency of Young People

The young people were identified through Youth Music Action Zones and the consultations were carried out in Birmingham, Norwich and Thanet. Forty six participated in the sessions, with the following breakdown in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and disability:

Gender:

Male – 20

Female – 26

Age range:

12-15 yrs – 62%

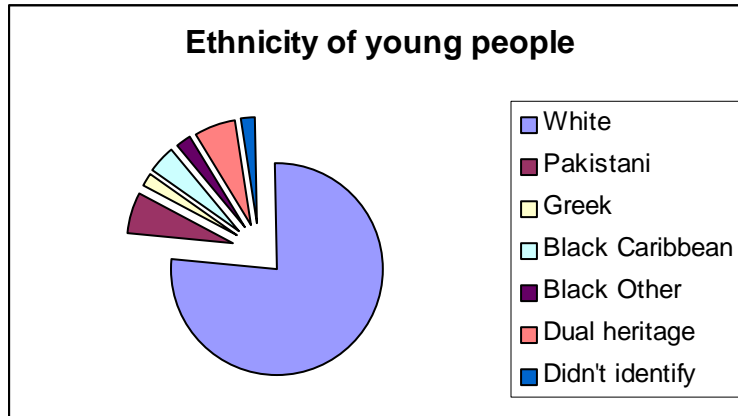
16-19 yrs – 22%

20+ yrs – 16%

One person didn't identify their age

Ethnicity of young people:

See chart below



Disability:

No disability - 43

Disability – 3 (identified as heart problem, dyslexia, speech and lazy eye)

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply X

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

X Yes No

Code of Practice on Consultation

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
5. Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Further information on the Code of Practice can be accessed through the Cabinet Office Website: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation-guidance/content/introduction/index.asp>

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 4 November 2005

Consultation responses can be made:

www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations

by email to: youthmatters.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

or in writing to:

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