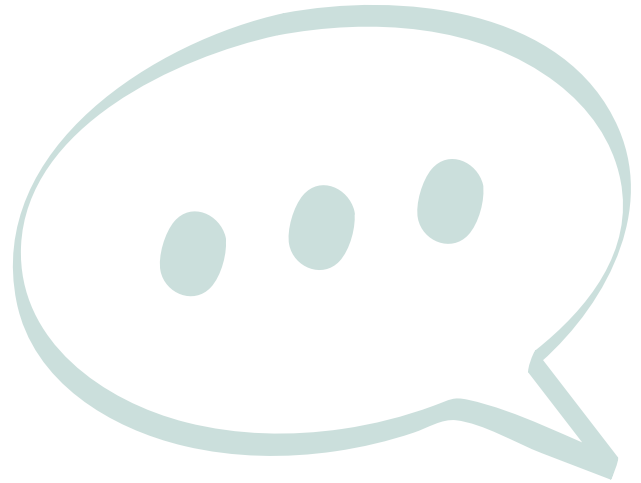


INTRODUCTION



We are the Jam and Justice group and started to meet up on a monthly basis and discuss and debate issues that are important to us. We didn't always think the same but we wanted to listen to each other's points of view and have discussions.

As a group we discussed issues of growing up, centred around decisions that young people are not involved in making.

So we put out a survey to ask other young people about their views and opinions on one of the topics we discussed. The question we asked was: what should be taught at school and college?

The reoccurring themes were:

- Taxes, Skills and Bills
- Politics and Law
- Healthy Relationships and Peer Pressure
- Sign language

We have named the report Life Lessons because the feedback from other young people has been that they want to be taught practical things that will prepare them and reduce confusion as they grow up and become increasingly independent.

Young people asked for there to be changes in the type of knowledge and awareness that is being taught, so this is what we and 138 young people think.

Many thanks to all the organisations across Greater Manchester that supported young people to complete the survey.

Arth
Candice
Tabinda
Chloe

"Finance, housing, general life lessons - it prepares us for life as an adult and helps us to understand the world better"

"How to understand life on your own such as taxes, finances, mortgages"

"Managing money, banking, cooking, how to run your own home - people need to be more independent"

Our survey showed us that many young people feel that this topic of money management and finance should be taught at school in a fun and practical way that relates to their day to day living.

As young people are growing up they want to learn about the practical things of running their own home, from cooking to budgeting and paying bills, and the range of financial matters that have to be dealt with. We feel that it does not get taught enough when you are young, so when you need it most people find managing money difficult. Some even start spending more than they have, and when they realise it's

TAXES SKILLS & BILLS



too late, which in turn causes them mental health issues because they don't know how to deal with the debts.

An example is, if you are working, and you get paid £50 a week, and then tax and insurance is deducted and you don't know about that and the reason for it. Unless you have been taught, this can be confusing and contribute to young people falling into debt.

We feel that the teaching of taxes and paying bills, along with money management, would enable young people to be knowledgeable and confident in the future and be aware of everything that is expected of them.

"Toxic and unhealthy relationships - a lot of people don't realise the difference between them and choose to continue with them because they believe it is love, but they should be taught the signs and how to deal with the toxic"

"How to deal with negative relationships, to have a healthy mind and say no to drink and drugs to cope"

"Pressure to act in a certain way, expectations of me. I struggle to fit the image that people have created for me and expect me to maintain"

Our survey showed us that this area was also important to young people. We feel that all people should be entitled to a healthy, safe relationship and not feel pressured into anything they don't wish to do.

When young people are in high school, they are more likely to get into relationships and also build

***HEALTHY*
RELATIONSHIPS**

**AND PEER
PRESSURE**



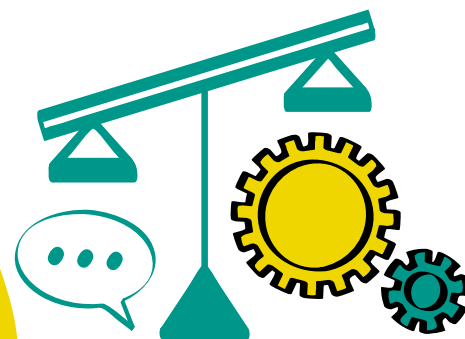
friendships. We need to know key information for the future and signs for when a relationship is not healthy. Not all relationships at home are safe so it's important to have a full understanding.

More lessons on communication, trust, safe consented sex, freedom in a relationship and friendship including warning signs of abuse are important and part of life. These lessons need to be fun and interactive using relatable stories from soaps and dramas that young people watch.

"I wasn't born in the UK so I don't know how the law works and what is right to do and not"

"The ability to vote for the issues being discussed at present are ones that affect our generation the most - hence it's imperative our views are heard"

"How Brexit is going to affect us"



POLITICS & LAW

The importance of politics being taught in school is social awareness, especially when something like Brexit is taking place; the young people/young adults are uncertain and unaware of how this may affect them. Moreover, it can educate young people about the views of political parties and which party fits more with their beliefs and which political party they agree with.

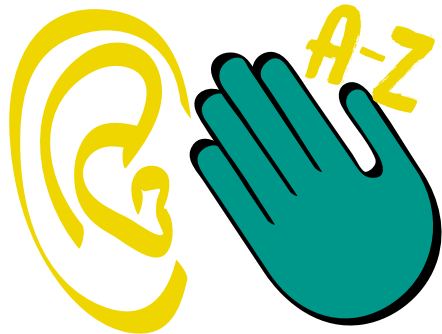
When it comes to voting, we know there is a low turnout among young people eligible to vote. We think it is because young people do not understand the different levels of politics from

local to national government, who is responsible for what, and how local and national decisions are made in the political arenas.

This survey has shown us that there are a lot of young people interested in issues, but are absent from the decisions which are taken by adults on behalf of young people when it doesn't affect the adults.

We were surprised that Brexit concerned young people and this tells us that young people also want to be listened to and be involved.

MANDATORY SIGN LANGUAGE



"Everyone should be treated equally including deaf people"

We think it's important that basic sign language is taught to everyone as part of the national curriculum and offered as a GCSE option alongside other languages when we choose our options.

It is a great skill to have. Young people and adults might have contact with deaf people in their day to day life and will need to know the basics to communicate with them. It helps equality and avoids loneliness, poor mental health, and depression.

It's about making everyone feel as though they are going to fit in. People with hearing impairments can feel isolated, and cannot speak to anyone.



RECOMMENDATIONS



Overall

1. When designing life lesson courses involve young people from diverse backgrounds in designing these to make sure they are useful and accessible.
2. Make the life lessons interactive, fun and relatable to everyday life. Use real situations to explore the themes from dramas and soaps.
3. Offer short courses with different levels that young people can choose when they are ready and deliver these using a range of approaches like face to face, online and video clips.
4. Offer digital badges that young people can collect once a course is completed and use as evidence for future employment and studies.
5. Sensitive topics to be delivered by other agencies that are confident, skilled and have up to date knowledge in their area.

Taxes, Skills and Bills

- * Provide resources to help inform young people about the skills they will require after they leave school.

Healthy Relationships and Peer Pressure

- * Healthy relationships and peer pressure to be taught in schools and colleges.

Politics and Law

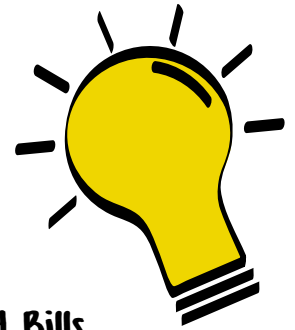
- * Reduce the voting age from 18 so that young people can have a voice on issues that affect them now.

Mandatory Sign Language

- * Basic sign language to be taught to all as part of the National Curriculum and an option at GCSE alongside other languages.

Our action:

- * Discuss these recommendations with decision makers and other young people both on a local level at Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Department for Education.



Right now in Britain there are children and young people who feel scared, unloved and unable to cope. The Children's Society works with these young people, step by step, for as long as it takes.

We listen. We support. We act.

There are no simple answers so we work with others to tackle complex problems. Only together can we make a difference to the lives of children now and in the future.

Because no child should feel alone.

Find out more at

childrenssociety.org.uk

jamandjustice-rjc.org/young-people-missing-decisions

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