

Life Lessons:

Technical Appendix

Background

About Jam and Justice

Life Lessons was designed, analysed and written by young people in the 'Jam and Justice group' – a youth-led action research team brought together by workers from The Children's Society and university academics. The name of the group was inherited from a wider research project, Jam and Justice: Co-producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation, with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council and Mistra Urban Futures. This project set up an Action Research Collective (ARC) of academics, practitioners, citizens and political leaders to exchange knowledge and develop creative responses to emerging urban governance challenges. The ARC generated ten ideas for action research projects to explore how to create more inclusive governance in Greater Manchester.

Young People Missing from Decisions

One of the ten action research projects was called 'Young People Missing from Decisions'. Working with ten young people over the course of year (the 'Jam and Justice group'), The Children's Society supported a youth-led design process to explore how young people are missing from decisions that routinely affect their lives. These young people decided to design a survey to ask other young people about their views and opinions on what is not taught at school and college that they feel they should know about, and the issues that young people felt were most important.

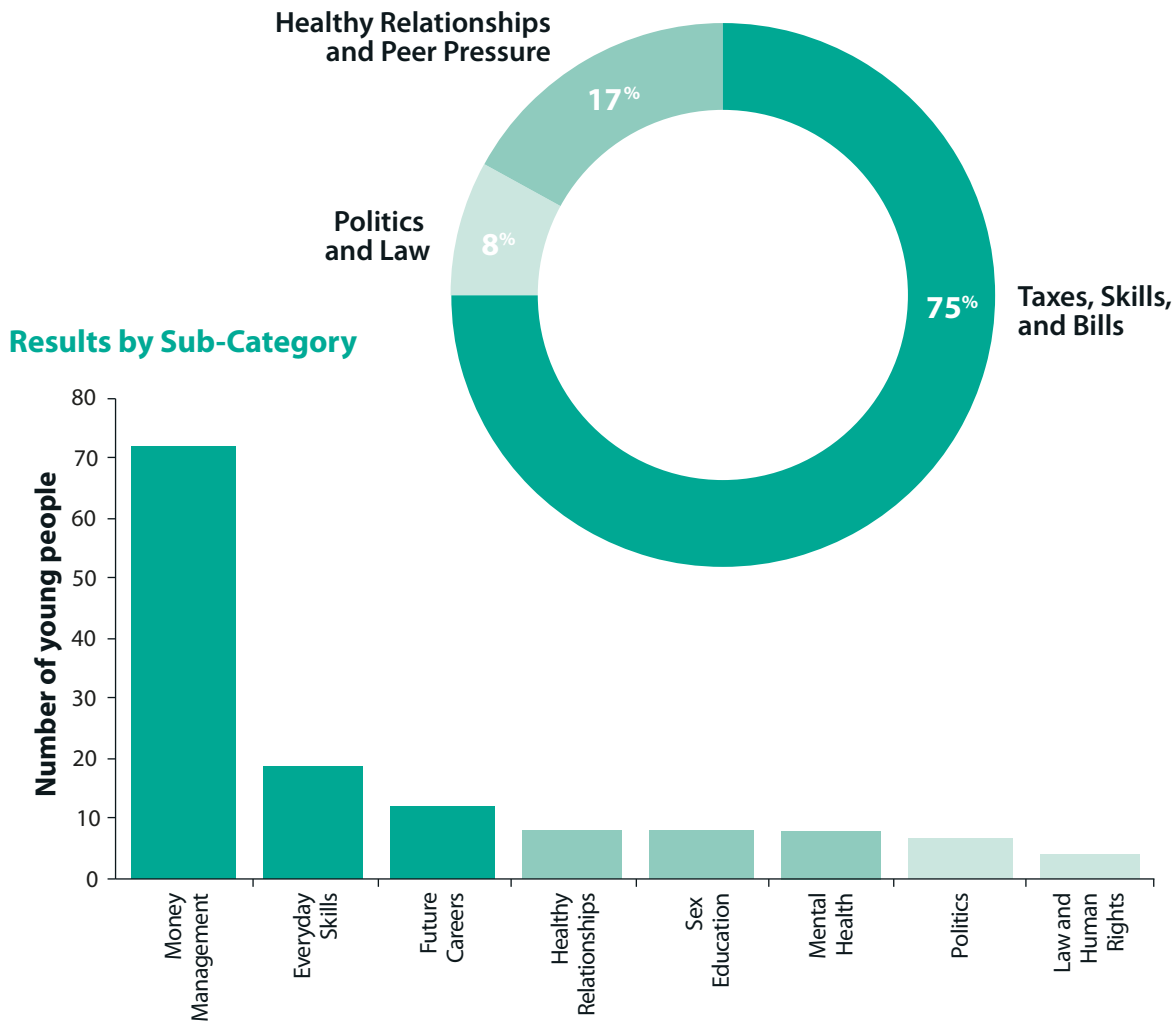
The survey was distributed through networks, which included participants' own networks through school, college and other youth groups; Greater Manchester Youth Network; Talent Match; Bury Rathbones; Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation; 42nd Street; Manchester Environmental Education Network; and the Children's Society. In total, 138 questionnaires were returned. Of the 138 survey respondents, 72% were aged over 16 years old, 26% were aged under 16 years old, and 2% of respondents did not answer. These questionnaires were analysed with the young people over three workshops. The academic team took responsibility for writing up the results in this Appendix, whilst the young people analysed and decided on key findings and lessons which are included in the main report.



If you want to download copies of the Life Lessons report and this Appendix, please visit jamandjustice-rjc.org/young-people-missing-decisions

Results

What don't you get taught at school?



Taxes, Skills, and Bills

Money Management	72
Everyday Skills	12
Future Careers	19
Total	103/138
	75% of respondents

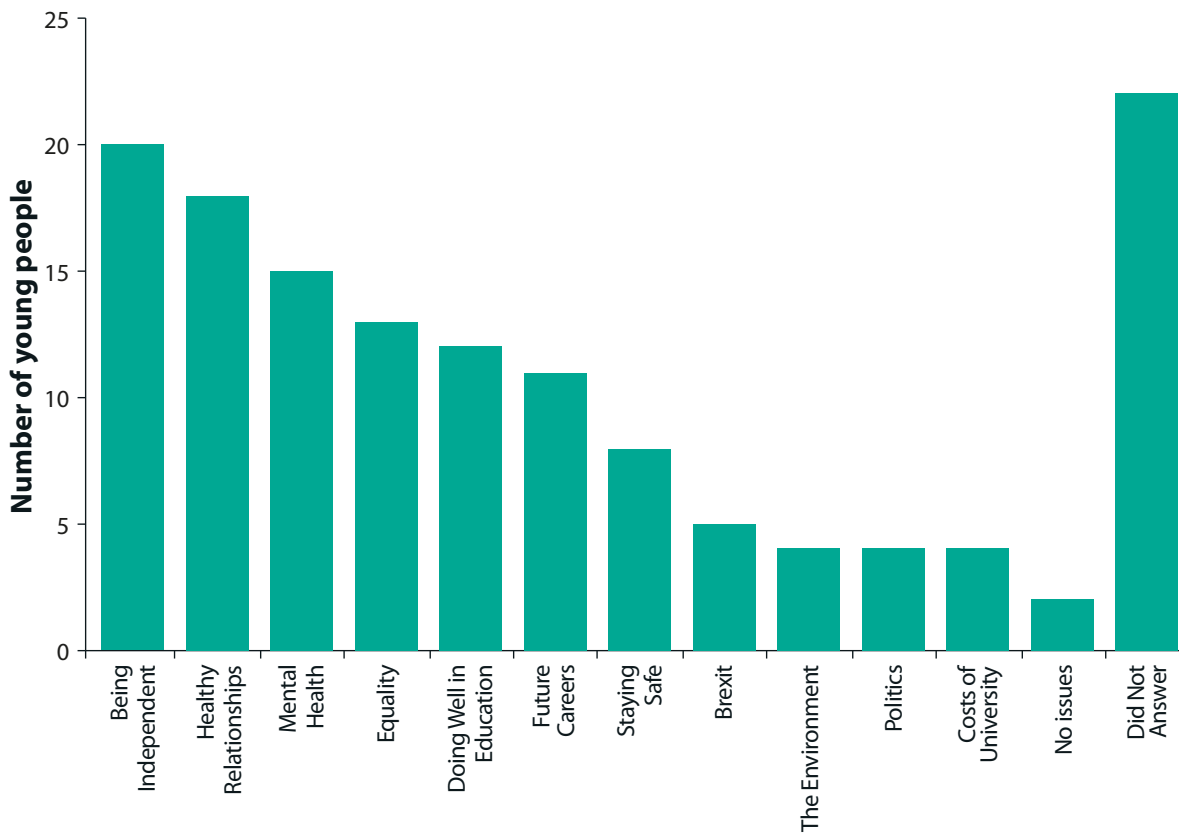
Healthy Relationships and Peer Pressure

Healthy Relationships	8
Sex Education	8
Mental Health	8
Total	24/138
	17% of respondents

Politics and Law

Politics	7
Law and Human Rights	4
Total	11/138
	8% of respondents

What issues are important for young people?



Being Independent	20
Healthy Relationships	18
Mental Health	15
Equality	13
Doing Well in Education	12
Future Careers	11
Staying Safe	8
Brexit	5
The Environment	4
Politics	4
Costs of University	4
No issues	2
Did Not Answer	22

What were the recommendations?

Extract from the Life Lessons report:

Overall

- When designing life lesson courses involve young people from diverse backgrounds in designing these to make sure they are useful and accessible.
- Make the life lessons interactive, fun and relatable to everyday life. Use real situations to explore the themes from dramas and soaps.
- 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.
- Offer digital badges that young people can collect once a course is completed and use as evidence for future employment and studies.
- 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.

The Life Lessons research has been led by young people. It has been supported by staff in The Children's Society — Suraya Skelland, Natalie Hindson, Joanne Hunt and Paul Maher; and by academic researchers from the Jam and Justice project — Dan Silver and Beth Perry.

