

# **DEVELOPING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN THE MILLENNIUM COHORT STUDY AND UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY**

## **FEEDBACK FROM NCB YOUNG RESEARCH ADVISORS FOR THE CENTRE OF LONGITUDINAL STUDIES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX**

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# Introduction

This report presents findings from research participation work carried out with the National Children's Bureau's (NCB) Young Research Advisor (YRA) group, on behalf of the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), Institute of Education, University of London, and the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at University of Essex.

Specifically it reports on feedback that the YRA group were invited to give, to help inform approaches to engage young people in two of the UK's largest longitudinal studies: The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS; also referred to in communication with participants as Child of the New Century)<sup>1</sup>; and the UK Household Longitudinal Study (also known as Understanding Society)<sup>2</sup>.

## Aims and objectives

In order to help inform engagement approaches for the two studies, the project focused on addressing three specific aims, each with a set of sub-objectives designed to meet each aim, as outlined below:

**Aim 1: To explore what works best when designing engagement materials for young people, including websites, and keeping in touch materials.**

Objectives:

- 1.1 To elicit feedback about communication materials/websites which the YRAs had identified as being well suited for young people.
- 1.2 To review seven pre-selected websites specifically aimed at young people and evaluate the various features in terms of how well they work at engaging young people.
- 1.3 To evaluate five pre-selected longitudinal study engagement materials, particularly regarding their content, design and level to which they are engaging for young people.
- 1.4 To review a gift pack from the Growing Up Australia longitudinal study and provide feedback on whether the contents could successfully engage young people in that study.

**Aim 2: To generate ideas for specific engagement approaches for the Millennium Cohort Study and Understanding Society.**

Objectives:

- 2.1 To explore the challenges associated with engagement of young people in longitudinal studies.

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1 [www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/mcs](http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/mcs)

2 [www.understandingsociety.ac.uk](http://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk)

- 2.2 To generate insight into how young people could successfully be retained/engaged in the two longitudinal studies: MCS and Understanding Society.

**Aim 3: Explore young people's views and use of different communications media and their role in young people's lives.**

Objectives:

- 3.1 To explore how young people use different communications media.  
3.2 To understand young people's views of different communications media and what they prefer for different purposes.

## **Methodology**

### **About the Young Research Advisor group**

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) run a group of Young Research Advisors (YRAs) to provide valuable input into internal and external research. The YRA group consists of 17 young people, aged between 12 and 21, who undertake or provide advice on research into different topics. The group represents a diverse range of backgrounds and health conditions. They are sometimes required to be participants of research and at other times they are required to take on the role of the researcher. As such the group has had training in various research methods.

Previously the YRA group has been involved in research activities such as taking part in conferences, inputting into research design and the development of research tools, reviewing grant proposals, reviewing project reports and helping to structure the direction of systematic reviews amongst other things. The group has been consulted by researchers from the Children's Policy Research Unit (Institute of Child Health, University College London) several times on various aspects of their research projects.

### **Session participants and methodologies**

For the purpose of this project, the facilitators ran seven 45-90 minute facilitated sessions with members of the YRA group: four sessions at a meeting in May 2013 and three at a meeting in June 2013.

Seventeen YRAs were invited to attend both meetings. A total of nine YRAs attended the May meeting and 11 YRAs attended the June meeting; there were six who were at both meetings. Table 1 below provides information about the age and gender profile of the YRAs participating in each meeting.

**Table 1: YRA profile**

May meeting							
Gender	Age						
Male	17	16	16	15	13	12	
Female	15	14	11				
June meeting							
Gender	Age						
Male	17	17	17	16	16	16	15
Female	20	15	13	11			

Table 2 below lists the seven activities carried out across the two meetings, highlighting how each one relates to the research objectives and the number of YRAs involved. A combination of semi-structured discussion groups and interactive activities were used to help engage the group and elicit constructive feedback. More detail about the methods used within each session is presented in the detailed findings sections.

**Table 2: Session activities**

Meeting	Aim	Objective	Session	Number of YRAs who participated.
May	1	1.1, 1.2	Reviewing communication materials/websites that are engaging for young people.	9
	2	2.1	Discussing the challenges of engaging participants in cohort studies.	9
	2	2.2	Discuss how young people could successfully be retained/engaged in two specific longitudinal studies.	Two discussion groups (n=4, n=5).
	1	1.3	Participate in a session reviewing existing longitudinal study communication materials, and identify what factors will be important for designing effective materials for this age group in the future.	9
June	1	1.4	Reviewing Growing up in Australia gift pack.	6
	3	3.1, 3.2	Participate in a discussion group about the role of various communications and media in their lives and discuss statements/statistics about young people's media use.	Two discussion groups (n=6, n=5).
	1	1.1, 1.2	Review websites which are tailored for young people.	5

## Background to the studies

At appropriate times in the sessions, the YRAs were provided with background information about the studies to help ensure their feedback was as informed and realistic as possible. Key information provided was as follows:

- MCS and Understanding Society are among some of the most important research studies in the UK. Each contributes a unique understanding of society and the changing life chances of its participants. They collect rich data that allow researchers across the world opportunities to analyse how complex social, economic, cultural and biological factors interact to contribute to people's life outcomes.
- Both studies are longitudinal studies meaning that the same people are asked to take part in the research at different times.
- MCS has approximately 19,000 young people who were born in 2000-2001 taking part. MCS is a large scale survey of the babies of the new millennium, and the families that are bringing them up. So far the child and their parents have been asked to take part in study activities when the child has been aged 9 months, 3 years, 5 years, 7 years and 11 years. The most recent wave of the survey at age 11 involved: parent interviews, and for children themselves: physical measurements, cognitive assessments (activities on a computer) a self completion questionnaire completed on paper, and collecting parent and child consent to a teacher survey. The next wave of data collection will occur when the child is 14.
- Understanding Society involves approximately 40,000 households in their study. Data is collected every year to provide continuous information on the families over time. All members of the household aged 10 and over are involved in the study. Adults aged 16+ receive an extensive face to face interview. Children aged 10-15 are asked to fill out a paper questionnaire. When children turn 16 they are interviewed like other adults. They are also followed up wherever they live when leave home. Adult study members have also participated in tests of "mental agility". The study addresses new and emerging research issues, such as the environmental impacts of household behaviour; health related behaviours and emerging diversity in UK society
- The success of the studies depends on effective long term engagement of participants. The studies use a range of communication materials to help keep participants engaged over time. All aspects of branding, communications and survey administration must be right. Formats and delivery approaches must respond to participant preferences, and be based on what is most effective at maintaining engagement as individual's circumstances change.

## Interpreting the findings

The YRA members' feedback represents research informed by young people's perspective, from a diverse group of young people.

When interpreting the findings it should be borne in mind that the YRA members are not panel members, and so their response to engagement materials may not be fully reflective of how panel members would respond. However, detailed explanation was given to the YRAs about the studies, and the prior survey waves and engagement materials they would have experienced to help ensure their start points for constructive input were as relevant as possible.

When reviewing feedback on panel engagement materials and methods for specific age groups within the panel studies, the age range of participants should also be borne in mind.

The MCS study is currently focused on engaging young people from aged 12 through to 14 and Understanding Society is concerned with engaging young people in a self completion survey aged 10-15, and then maintaining interest in transition to an adult survey from 16 and when young people leave home.

Where appropriate, young people were asked to reflect on what would be appropriate for specific age groups, It should be borne in mind that at the May meeting four participants were aged 11-14, and five were aged 15-17. At the June meeting, two were aged 11-13; eight were aged 15-17 and one young person with cerebral palsy was aged 20 years.

## **Structure of the findings report**

The remainder of this document sets out the key findings from the research sessions. Findings are reported in three main sections, reflecting the three aims of the research:

- Aim 1: To explore what works best when designing engagement materials for young people, including websites, and keeping in touch materials.
- Aim 2: To generate ideas for specific engagement approaches for the Millennium Cohort Study and Understanding Society cohort study.
- Aim 3: Explore young people's views and use of different media and its role in their lives.

Within each of these sections, details of the:

- aim of the activities are included,
- how the session methodologies worked,
- key recommendations,
- detailed feedback from YRAs (with reference to the session materials if relevant) are presented.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to place on record our thanks for the input provided by Lisa Calderwood, Lucinda Platt and Meghan Rainsberry from the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, and John Burton from University of Essex in reviewing materials and supporting the session. Importantly, we would like to thank the YRA members for their high level of engagement and constructive input.



## **Aim 1: To identify what works best when designing engagement materials for young people, including websites, and keeping in touch materials**

To address aim 1 the YRAs participated in four sessions which were designed to address each of the three objectives under this aim.

The session methodologies for objectives 1.1 and 1.2 are presented below followed by the key recommendations from the YRAs' feedback. This is then followed by a more detailed summary of the YRAs' feedback with reference to the materials and websites reviewed.

Findings from objective 1.3 and objective 1.4 are then presented following the same reporting structure: the session methodologies are presented, followed by a summary of key recommendations and then more detailed YRA feedback including fuller reference to the materials reviewed.

### **Objective 1.1 Exploring views of materials and websites which YRAs identified as well suited for young people**

#### **Methodology**

Nine YRAs were set a pre-task three weeks prior to the meeting. The task was to identify written materials or websites they felt exemplified good design and content aimed at young people. Three group members brought examples of each to the meeting in order to discuss and elicit feedback about communication materials generally.

These were:

- An NSPCC "feel safe at home" leaflet<sup>3</sup>
- The Beat Bullying website<sup>4</sup>
- The Hide Out website (supporting those suffering from domestic violence)<sup>5</sup>

The facilitators used the following questions as starter points for the discussion:

- What works well/what do you like and why? First impressions?
- What do you think about the content? Why do you like it?
- What style of language is used? Is it suitable for young people?
- Who do you think this is aimed at?
- Is the font easy to read? (If no, what do you think would work better?)
- Do you like the use of icons, colours and images? Why?
- What features are the best? What doesn't work so well?

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<sup>3</sup> [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/feelsafeathome\\_wdf48021.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/feelsafeathome_wdf48021.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

<sup>5</sup> [www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/default.aspx](http://www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/default.aspx)

The facilitators recorded the responses on flipchart paper. This session lasted 20 minutes and was held in the May meeting.

## **Objective 1.2 Exploring views of the design features of websites designed for young people**

### **Methodology**

A total of seven YRAs were split into two small groups of three and four. The aim of this session was to review seven pre-selected websites specifically aimed at young people and evaluate the various features in terms of how well they work for engaging young people. Each group worked with a facilitator to review four pre-selected websites. Both groups were asked to evaluate the features of the sites and provide insight into what they liked/disliked and why with an emphasis on what young people find engaging. The groups spent between 7-10 minutes reviewing each website. Some websites were covered in more depth than others due to the nature of the website i.e. it contained more features/content. The facilitators made detailed notes. The session lasted 35 minutes and was held in the June meeting.

The seven websites were:

1. NSPCC <sup>6</sup>
2. Facebook <sup>7</sup>
3. Wimps<sup>8</sup>
4. Young Hackney<sup>9</sup>
5. Talk to FRANK<sup>10</sup>
6. Teenage Health Freak<sup>11</sup>
7. UK Youth Parliament<sup>12</sup>

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6 [www.nspcc.org.uk/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)

7 [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

8 [wimps.tv/stories/lets-talk-volunteering/](http://wimps.tv/stories/lets-talk-volunteering/)

9 [www.younghackney.org/](http://www.younghackney.org/)

10 [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

11 [www.teenagehealthfreak.org](http://www.teenagehealthfreak.org)

12 [www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk](http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk)

## Key recommendations – Objectives 1.1 and 1.2

### Overall design:

- Websites that are simple in style, professional-looking, and easy to navigate were considered the most appealing to use. NSPCC, Facebook and Talk to Frank websites all stood out as being very well-designed. Websites which were seen as being “too busy” were regarded as not being young people friendly.
- However, as well as the above, they need to be designed in styles that are relatable for children and young people. For example, the UK Youth Parliament website was praised for being professional in design but the group did not like this website as a whole and they would not use it. They felt that the design does not appeal to young people.
- Young people talk about designs in terms of being relevant for three distinct audiences: “children/younger children”, “young people” and “adults”. For example, they were positive about a website that had three areas for the three different groups.
- Features suitable for children/younger children (but regarded as too “babyish” for older teenagers e.g. aged 14+) included:
  - Bright simple cheerful colours (e.g. primary colours and simple pastel colours.)
  - Traditional style soft-feature cartoon characters.
- For those aged 14 and older more sophisticated/subtle colours that are still nevertheless eye-catching are deemed more suitable. Representational illustrations (e.g. of teenagers) are welcome but they need to be more sophisticated than cartoon like images.
- The YRAs were keen to stress that that materials or websites which deal with serious subject matters, such as bullying and domestic abuse, should still use attractive and engaging designs to gain young people’s interest. However, they felt there is a fine balance between being engaging and “not taking the subject seriously” by using colours which are too bright or images which make light of the topic. They felt that the websites The Hide out and Beat Bullying achieve this balance well.
- Creative, audio-visual and interactive features are also appealing for young people when done well, for example videos, chat rooms and the ability to personalise styles. These types of “standout” features are discussed in more detail below.

### Stand out features:

- Use of videos on websites was seen as positive as “watching a video is much better than reading loads of text”. Young people are used to seeing videos on websites and almost expect them. Displaying information in interesting ways, such as using pictures and less text, was seen to be a very good thing as young people do not like to waste time trawling through text to find the help/advice they need. This was seen as particularly important for serious topics where the user might need immediate help. For example, the Teenage Health Freak website was deemed as being too “text heavy”.
- Being able to personalise websites was seen as positive. One of the websites (Beat Bullying) has a feature which lets the user choose an avatar to represent them. The YRAs felt that this gives the user the chance to showcase their personality whilst maintaining anonymity and is an easy way to keep them engaged. The NSPCC

website allows the user to personalise the background which was seen as less fun but still useful in helping to encourage engagement.

- The NSPCC and Talk to Frank websites both have online chat functions. The group felt that having the option to talk to a professional, especially about serious subject matters, was very useful. They did not however like when the service was slow or the other person took a long time to respond. The Teenage Health Freak website has a similar feature called 'Dr Ann' where the user emails in questions but the group really disliked this as they felt Dr Ann never answers.
- For websites dealing with serious topics a 'hide this page' or 'escape' feature was seen as being extremely useful as young people may fear seeking help. By having such a feature in a prominent position of the page the user may feel reassured and continue to use the site.
- Young people are aware of confidentiality and safety issues; some were wary of a chat room until they had seen information about confidentiality. Clear information should be provided about these points on any website.
- The group liked games being featured within websites designed for a wider purpose. However, they were very clear about when they felt these were appropriate or not. The NSPCC website uses games whilst the user waits for other content to load and everyone really liked this. On the Talk to Frank website, however, the group felt that the games were too "jokey" and really took away from the serious topic and their overall impression of the website.
- Being able to see what their friends 'liked' on Facebook was seen as a good thing as it keeps the user up to date on new trends.
- The group liked being able to see 'upcoming events' and timelines. Facebook and Young Hackney include events updates and the group liked both of these.
- They disliked registration requirements. They liked being able to participate in websites e.g. use live chat, without having to register as a user. The YRAs did not like signing up to websites as they were wary of wasting their time and giving their personal details. However, they suggested that making the benefits of registering clearer on the homepage might encourage young people to take the time needed to sign up. They also suggested that access needed to be easy and quick, with a general rule that anything requiring more than a couple of clicks would be off-putting. Any issues about confidentiality and anonymity should be made clear at this stage.

## Detailed findings – Objective 1.1

Feedback on the three individual materials selected by the YRAs:

### 1. ***'Feel safe at home – what to do if violence is happening around you'***<sup>13</sup> (leaflet)

The leaflet is aimed at providing young people with information about domestic violence.

*Overall design:*

- The group regarded the leaflet to be attractive, simple, bright, easy to read and used “good images”. The leaflet felt “welcoming” even though the subject matter is serious (see figure 1 below).



Figure 1: Front cover.

- It was felt that the leaflet appeared to be aimed at children aged between 10 and 14 because of the font, bright colours, mix of patterns and cartoon-like images used throughout. These were all deemed appropriate for this age group.

*Images:*

- The leaflet features images of a house and dog which appear to be menacing. The group liked the use of these images as they felt that these reflected the serious subject matter in a non-threatening manner (see figure 2 below).

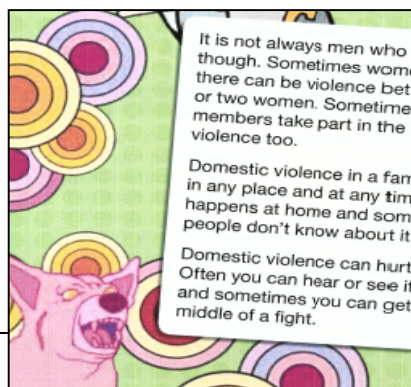


Figure 2: Use of 'menacing' images.

<sup>13</sup> [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/feelsafeathome\\_wdf48021.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/feelsafeathome_wdf48021.pdf).

## 2. *Beat Bullying*<sup>14</sup> (website)

Beat Bullying is a website which provides advice, guidance and information to young people regarding bullying.

*Overall design:*

- The group praised the design of the website for being precise and simple (see figure 3 below). They like the colours used through as they are eye-catching but “*not too bright*”. This balance is important to them as the subject matter is serious. The group felt that the design of the website should be inviting but not be too light-hearted as it would take away from the serious message.

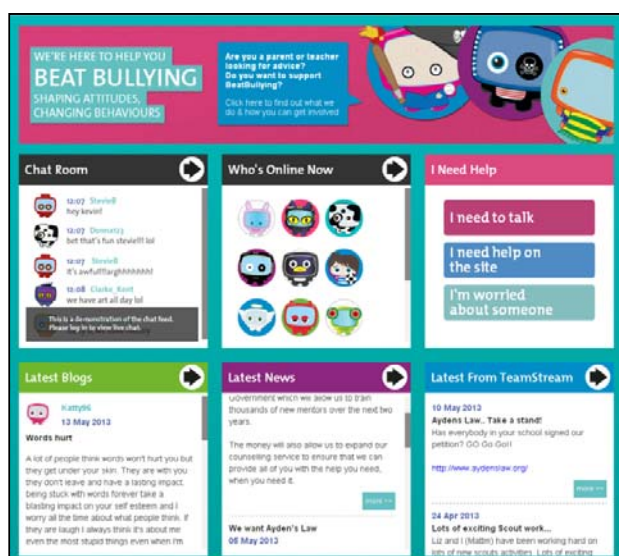


Figure 3: *Beat Bullying* website homepage.

*Target audience:*

- The group felt that the website is designed to appeal to young people aged 14 years and younger and it was agreed that the design was not suitable for older teenagers. The YRAs suggested that if the website wanted to attract older teenagers then there should be a section of the website aimed specifically at them. The content of this section could be the same but the design would need to change as the current design was too “*babyish*”.

*Images:*

- The website uses avatars instead of images of real young people (see figure 4 below). All of the group like this and felt it worked within the website very well. They

<sup>14</sup> [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

felt that the option to choose an avatar to represent them gives the user the chance to showcase their personality whilst maintaining anonymity. Being able to personalise the website to their preference is seen as very positive.



Figure 4: Cartoon like avatars.

#### Navigation:

- The website is easy to navigate and has lots of information presented in interesting ways such as statistics and sign posting to other organisations. The group like that it was easy to read and did not look “too busy”.

#### Stand out features:

- The ‘I need help’ section stood out to the group because it is simple, precise and has a sense of urgency which reflects the serious subject matter (see figure 5 below). Having this on the home page in a prominent position was appreciated. There are also clear options regarding what type of help was required which can help young people in stressful situations.

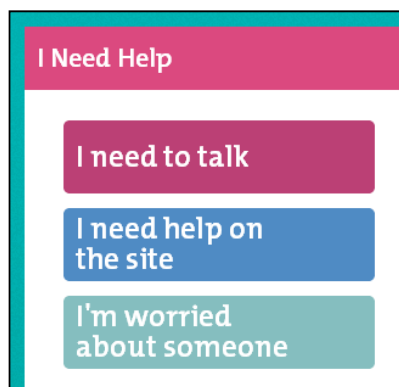


Figure 5: Stand out feature ‘I need help’.

- The group felt that the chat room was a very good idea but some did not want to “waste time” registering to use it. However, they suggested that the benefits of registering needed to be made clearer on the homepage to encourage young people to take the time needed to sign up. They also suggested that access needed to be easy and quick, with a general rule that anything requiring more than a couple of clicks would be off-putting.



- The group expressed concern about confidentiality of discussions within the chat room. However, one of the YRAs stated that upon registration there is information provided about confidentiality which addresses any concerns. This is seen as important.

### 3. *The Hide Out*<sup>15</sup> (website)

The Hide Out is a website aimed at children, young people and adults about domestic abuse.

*Overall design:*

- This website is divided into three sections (see figure 6 below). From the homepage users can select to enter one of three sections of the website: the children's section, the young people's section or the adult's section. The group like the idea of having different sections to suit the age group as this had been one of their earlier suggestions for another website.
- They found the links to other websites helpful if they wanted more information.

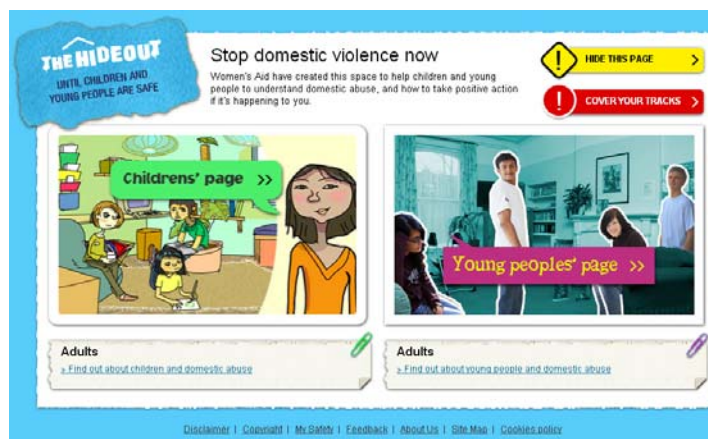


Figure 6: *The Hide Out* website homepage.

*Images:*

- Despite there being three sections of the website for different age groups, the cartoon like images used on each section are all the same (see figure 7 below). The group felt that the images should vary depending on the audience. They discussed each image and felt that while the images were suitable for the children's section they are "too childish" for the young people/adult sections<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> [www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/default.aspx](http://www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/default.aspx)

<sup>16</sup> NB: Since this activity was conducted The Hide Out website has changed the images used in the young people section of the website from cartoon animations to images of real young people. The image presented in figure 7 depicts the older version which the young people saw in this activity.





Figure 7: Cartoon like images used.

*Stand out features:*

- The 'hide this page' and the 'cover your tracks' features were highly praised by the group (see figure 8 below).
- The group felt that these features would help ensure users feel safe and prevent them feeling worried about others knowing they have been on the website. The group feel this is important given the serious nature of the topic.
- The website features a short video explaining what domestic violence is. The group liked this video as it was engaging, "*something different*" and was interesting to watch.

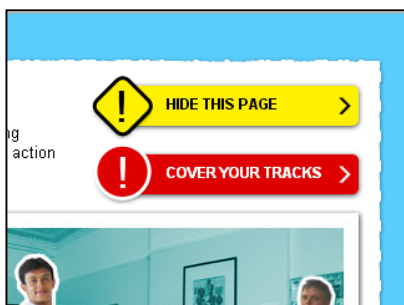


Figure 8: Stand out features.

## Detailed findings – Objective 1.2

Feedback on the seven websites reviewed by the YRAs:

### 1. NSPCC

*Overall design:*

- The group felt this website is very easy to navigate. They also like that the topics featured on the website are all relevant to young people.
- The background was regarded as “*really cool*” as the user can customise/personalise the wallpaper on the screen (see figure 36 below). Being able to personalise websites is considered to be fun and would encourage young people to use the site.

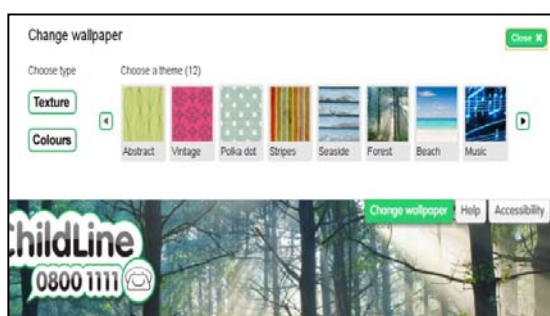


Figure 36: Personalization options.

*Standout features:*

- The group liked the online chat function which allows users to speak to a professional, such as a counsellor, quickly (see figure 37 below).

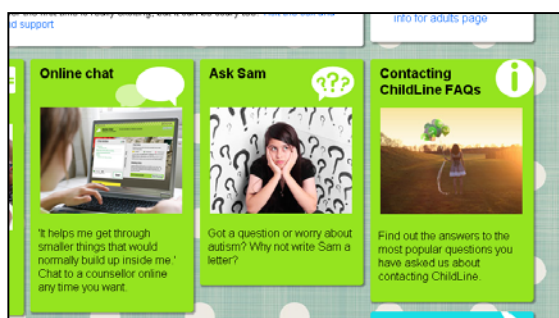


Figure 37: Online chat function.

- There is a waiting room with games which the YRAs felt is a good feature. It ensures the user is not idle while waiting for the site to load (see figure 38 below).

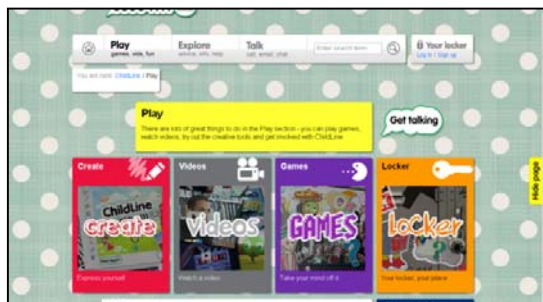


Figure 38: Online games.

- There is an escape feature on this website that the user can press so that the website then changes to the Google home page. The young people really like this feature as it makes the user feel safer using the website.

## 2. Facebook

### Overall design:

- The layout is regarded as being very neat, easy to navigate, nice and simple.

### Stand out features:

- Being able to organise Facebook friends into groups is regarded as a good feature as it allows the user to control which group see what posts i.e. they can change their privacy settings according to the friendship groups.
- The group enjoy the news feed feature. They discussed how it is useful to see the things their friends' have 'liked' as they can then 'like' them too.
- The group does not like getting friend requests from people they do not know.
- They like using the events feature which allows them to set up an event and share details in one place. However, some felt they still prefer to text.

### 3. Wimps

Overall design:

- The group like the news topics feature across the top of the home page (see figure 39 below).

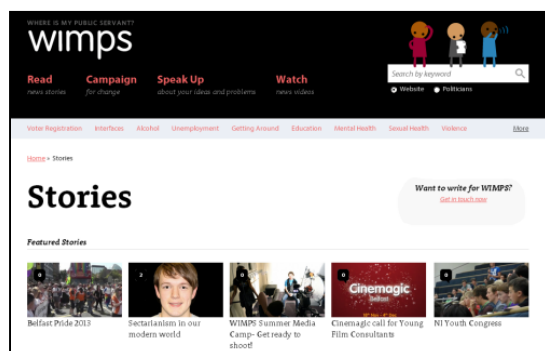


Figure 39: News feature.

- However, overall they do not like this website. They would not choose to go on this website and would only do so if they had a very specific reason.
- Reasons for this include the young people's dislike of the “grown up” colours and layout. As a result, they felt it would not stand out to young people.

### 4. Young Hackney

Overall design:

- The young people felt the design of the website is “teenage friendly”, attractive and accessible. The colours used on the site are all considered to be very good at attracting young people (a mixture of purple, red, green and yellow). Icons at the top of each page that link to other social media sites are seen to be very useful in order to maximise and continue engagement.
- However, the group felt that they would not use this website as its content is tailored to a specific local audience.

Stand out features:

- The group praised the ‘what’s on’ feature as it showcases upcoming events and reminded them of the Facebook events feature which they consider to be good (see figure 40 below).



Figure 40: What's on events feature.

- They enjoy the option of completing surveys online but feel they would only do so if it was not too time consuming (see figure 41 below).



Figure 41: Brief survey.

## 5. Talk to FRANK

### Overall design:

- The group feel the design of this website is the best out of all reviewed. They praised it for being “*professional looking*”, including real photos of people and thought the use of accessible language as being especially impressive. The group also really like that they can use the website without having to register or sign up to an account.

### Standout features:

- The ‘drugs A-Z box’ on the homepage is very clear and eye-catching (see figure 42 below).

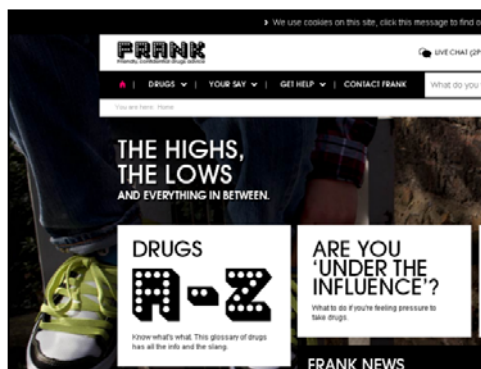


Figure 42: Drugs A-Z box on homepage.

- The group like the live chat option but felt that on this website it takes a long time for anyone to respond, which is frustrating. The 'Frank is typing...' response on the instant chat was seen to be great because it suggests there's a real person there, rather than an automated response (see figure 43 below).



Figure 43: Talk to FRANK live chat.

- The group thought that the light-hearted nature of the games featured is not appropriate as it does not match the seriousness of the subject matter. The group find this confusing and thought it may send a mixed message to young people viewing the website to get support. They discussed one game in particular, a pinball game where they had to avoid hitting the brain with drugs. They felt the harsh tone of the game did not match the overall supportive tone of the website. Some felt the game was saying you will die if you take drugs.

## 6. Teenage Health Freak

### Overall design:

- The group think that there is too much text on this website and that it should make better use of bullet points. There was some use of the bold font feature to highlight key words; however the young people said this is not enough to encourage them to read all of the information.

- The look is very appealing but more so to a younger age group (12-14 year olds).

*Standout features:*

- The group liked the animations used and felt that they would appeal to all ages as they are not “childish” (see figure 44 below).



Figure 44: Animated images.

- The email submission ‘Dr. Ann’ feature is considered to be “rubbish” (see figure 45 below). The group think emails are not replied to. One young person discussed using this feature in the past and also being frustrated at not getting a reply. The group believe that the disclaimer on the website which says they are not able to answer all emails is off-putting. They agree that a live chat feature is more effective.



Figure 45: Dr Ann feature.

- While the group like the animated spotlight feature, they are not as enthusiastic about the overall design compared to the FRANK website.
- The website features animated case studies of young peoples' stories in a diary format. The group though this idea was good but the actual diary animation was seen as too “childish” and “looks like a picture book for kids” (see figure 46 below).



Figure 46: Diary feature.

## 7. UK Youth Parliament

### Overall design:

- The group praised this website for its professional design (see figure 47 below).

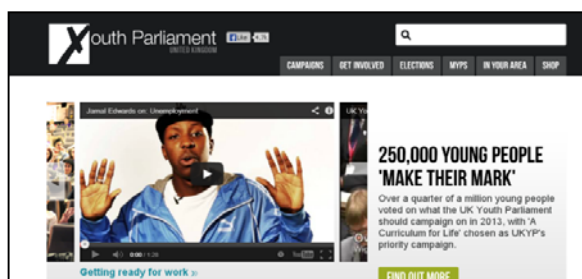


Figure 47: UK Youth Parliament website homepage.

- Despite this, the group did not like this website and they would not use it. As with the Wimps website, they felt that the design does not appeal to young people or draw the eye in and uses colours which are too “grown up” for the audience.
- The group also do not like the ‘Get Involved’ section as it led them to many other sites. They prefer to have all information in the same place.
- While the signposting on the site is good and young people can find campaigners in their local area, the group were unclear as what to do next which was off-putting.

### Stand out features:

- The group has mixed feelings regarding the feature which allows users to set which content they are interesting in looking at. While they enjoy having this option they are less enthusiastic about registering on the website to do so.



## **Objective 1.3 Providing feedback on youth engagement materials from five cohort studies**

### **Methodology**

This session required the YRAs to review engagement materials used in different longitudinal studies that were provided by the facilitators.

A total of nine YRAs took part in this session and were placed into pre-determined groups of either two or three. Each group was asked to spend a total of 35 minutes reviewing the materials with the aim of reviewing three engagement materials each. At the end of the session each set of material had been seen by at least two groups for 10-15 minutes each.

The materials were set out on a table and each table was staffed by a facilitator. Each table also had a written introduction with some brief background information about the study including: the country the study was located in, when the study began, the type of participants involved, the purpose of the material and the target audience.

Each facilitator talked through a set of questions about their specific materials with each group of YRAs. The questions covered:

- first impressions
- content
- language
- design
- layout
- branding
- how the leaflet made them feel
- how it represented the study.

Materials were provided from the following studies:

#### **1. Understanding Society**

This leaflet is targeted at 16 to 25 year olds and provides feedback on findings from a recent stage of the study. The leaflet aims to keep participants engaged in the study, including by highlighting the importance of their involvement and the difference they have made.

#### **2. Children of the 90s (ALSPAC)**

This leaflet pack is aimed at young adults (early 20s). It asks research participants to re-consent to being part of the ALSPAC panel and to receive invitations to take part in future research. It also asks for consent to data linkage to a range of different records. It includes a summary leaflet as well as more detailed information.

### 3. Growing up in Ireland (GUI)

This leaflet was designed by a panel of young people. It is aimed at 11 year olds who are part of the study and provides feedback on some of the findings from the last survey. The aim of the leaflet is to keep the young people engaged in the research, including by highlighting to them what difference their involvement has made.

### 4. Growing up in Australia (GUA)

This leaflet is aimed at 12-13 year olds and provides feedback on some of the findings from the last survey. The aim of the leaflet is to keep young people engaged in the research, including by highlighting to them the difference their involvement has made.

### 5. Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)

This leaflet is aimed at 12 year olds. It is a keep in touch leaflet and provides some information about the findings from the survey that was conducted when the participants were aged 7.

## Key recommendations – Objective 1.3

#### Overview:

- Young people favour materials that communicate simply, clearly and directly. They prefer content, design and branding to be interesting and informative as well as to explicitly support communication of clear engagement messages. All features should be included for a reason, and caution should be taken before any features are included for reasons of style rather than of substance as this could detract from key messages.

#### Content:

- Content should be clear and focused. Content that detracts from key messages should be avoided.
- Feedback on findings from the study is welcome and an important part of the engagement feedback loop.
- Given that some young people may expect findings to come from the most recent wave of a study, it is important to explain why the most recent data isn't available yet (i.e. if older findings are provided instead). This may help manage expectations.
- Careful attention should be given to the selection of content. There should be a clearly communicated rationale for the selection of content so that it does not feel “*confused*” or “*random*”, a criticism which the Growing Up in Australia (GUA) leaflet received. Content should also be balanced, interesting and add to young people's existing knowledge. For example, the narrow focus of content in the MCS study leaflet was criticised, as well as the information being too simple and “*obvious*”. In contrast some figures in the Growing Up in Ireland study (GUI) were seen as interesting because they were “*surprising*”.
- There are concerns about whether sensitive content might upset some young people – e.g. about bullying or obesity.

- Communicating findings succinctly, avoiding unnecessary detail and presenting information in a variety of ways could be helpful for ensuring universal appeal. It was suggested that young people who don't like maths or statistics may find the frequent use of graphs and numbers off-putting.
- Qualitative anecdotes and info-graphics should be used to make findings more interesting when possible. This was well received in the Understanding Society leaflet, as was the use of info-graphics in the GUA leaflet which featured a tennis ball pie-chart with findings about sport.
- It is important for longitudinal studies to provide participants with information on study impact and how findings have been used. This is seen as important for encouraging young people to feel their participation is worthwhile (e.g. as in the Understanding Society leaflet). Demonstrating this is vital given that a key selling point for participation is that it will help improve things for other people in society.
- Documents should have the right amount of information and be of the right length. The length of the GUA was seen to be ideal (8 x A5 pages). The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) leaflet was regarded as too short and simple by some, whilst very long documents were seen as off-putting and daunting for others (e.g. the Children of the 90s (ALSPAC) engagement pack). Summary documents with key information are important in this context, to ensure that nothing important is missed.
- Leaflets should be as explicit as possible in linking young people to the purpose and aims of the study. A suggestion is to include context information to remind participants of what the study is about, and also to be explicit in explaining when findings have come from information young people have provided. The introduction to the GUA was praised this context.
- Content and images should reflect the remit of the study. Some content of the GUA was criticised as being insufficiently Australian (e.g. the vegetarian meal recipe and the focus on tourist attractions rather than features that Australian children themselves might find relevant to their own lives). The content of the Understanding Society leaflet is also seen as too generic, and a focus on the unique features of the study is suggested as helpful for engagement.
- Use of a magazine-like style and features such as puzzles and activities is not necessarily seen as a good approach. Whilst some liked the puzzles in the GUI leaflet, others who disliked activity books found this off-putting. Overall, the inclusion of these aspects is felt to detract and confuse the key messages.

#### **Design:**

- Design is important for how young people feel about the materials and the study. For example one YRA commented the design of the GUA leaflet was *"so nice it feels like a reward for being in the study"*.
- Design features should support communication. Young people were critical when patterned backgrounds, borders, headers and footers or images added nothing to the "message" and got in the way of digesting the key content. The ALSPAC leaflet was regarded as a positive example because it had a clear and simple layout and consistent font, for example. However, the GUI leaflet, and to some extent GUA leaflet was regarded as too *"busy"* and *"cluttered."*

- However, bright, eye-catching “*busy*” designs are also well placed to excite interest and curiosity among young people. The design challenge is to create materials that simultaneously attract interest, whilst remaining streamlined, straightforward and pleasing to digest.
- Images are welcome, but they must be of a high quality. Young people are sophisticated consumers in design terms, and expect images and illustrations to be of the highest professional quality.
- Images must add something relevant otherwise they can detract from communication of key messages and/or be regarded as “pointless” or as “trying too hard” which gives a negative impression.
- When choosing text fonts, readability should never be sacrificed for “*style*”. Text identified as hard to read included: 3d writing, bubble writing, and some combinations of coloured text on coloured backgrounds. Consistency of font was also favoured (e.g. this was praised in the ALSPAC leaflet, and lack of consistency criticised in the Understanding Society and GUI leaflets). The fonts used in GUA were well received.
- When used, charts should be kept simple and clear (for example, avoiding decimal places). They should be clearly labelled and use formats that young people are familiar with (e.g. percentages).
- Choice of images contributes to the emotional “tone” of materials, such as how “*serious*” the information is, or how reassuring. Examples of effective images used to communicate sensitive subjects tended to include objects that represented the serious issue, but with design features that softened impact and promoted reassurance (for example, non-realist illustrations of the object, or the inclusion of more “*friendly*” colours and images). For positive examples see feedback on the “feel safe at home” website and the Beat Bullying website discussed earlier.
- Branding was rarely commented on directly, but this does need careful attention. For example, MCS and Understanding Society logos were criticised for being boring or requiring improvement.

#### **Effective audience targeting:**

- As mentioned earlier, young people talk about designs in terms of being relevant for three distinct audiences: “children/younger children”, “young people” and “adults”.
- A feature especially suitable for young people (as distinct from adults) seemed to include bright and eye-catching designs/colours, but using more sophisticated/subtle colours and designs than those for younger children.
- Representational illustrations (e.g. of people) are welcome. However, they need to have a strong artistic design quality, with detail that is both interesting and recognisable and reflects relatable fashion styles. E.g. the image of a “gothic kid” on the GUI leaflet was well regarded because it was cool, and incorporated quality details.
- The pictures and sketches in the ALSPAC leaflet were regarded as good examples of relatable design.
- The amount and complexity of content must be pitched appropriately. Content was seen as too basic in the MCS leaflet for young people aged around 14 and at a more appropriate level in GUA.

- Images of people should be carefully selected to reflect the intended target group such as the correct age group (e.g. the Understanding Society leaflet was criticised for having the wrong age group on the front).
- YRAs were clear that leaflets should be gender neutral. Both males and females should be included in images to avoid giving the message that the leaflet is aimed at only one gender. Colours should be chosen to avoid “gendering”. For example, the amount of pink on the front cover of the ALSPAC leaflet was queried and the use of blue was queried in the MCS leaflet whilst use of gender-neutral colours in GUA was commended. YRA members reacted negatively to gendering of findings in the MCS leaflets as too “*stereo-typical*”. Young people are taught at school that stereo-typing is a bad thing, and there was a feeling that leaflets should reflect “good practice” in promoting neutrality.
- Language should be consistent in conveying who the content is addressed at. For example, the language used in the GUA leaflet is felt to be confusing as it is aimed at both the whole family and to young people.

#### **The front page:**

- Having an eye-catching design and interesting content on the front page to excite the reader is seen to be important. It may also be helpful to avoid excessive text on the front.
- It is important for the reader to be informed quickly upfront what the purpose of the document is (e.g. the ALSPAC pack was an example of where this was not as immediately clear as the YRAs would have liked).
- Choice of images on the front page has a strong impact in conveying who the intended audience is and this needs careful attention.

## **Detailed Feedback: Objective 1.3**

Feedback on the five longitudinal study engagement materials reviewed by the YRAs:

### **1. Understanding Society**

#### *Overall impact:*

- The content of this leaflet is regarded as good, interesting and relevant by most. The group discussed how the leaflet made them consider its key issues and felt it was successful in engaging them.
- The group have mixed feelings about the design of the leaflet. Some felt it is good at attracting attention but when discussed in detail the group questioned whether it is too much like a magazine and was deemed insufficiently serious for the subject matter (see figure 9 below).

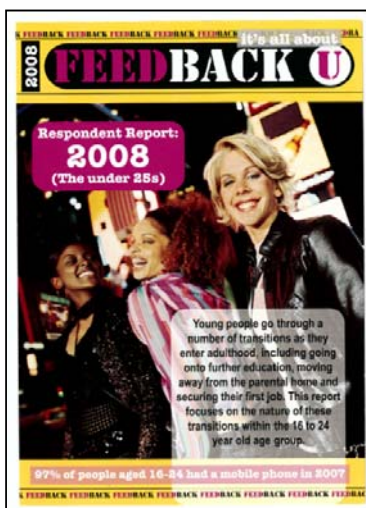


Figure 9: Front cover of the Understanding Society leaflet.

- Others find the design unappealing as it *“tries too hard”* and felt this may put them off reading it all. The group felt that the study lacks clear branding and this leaflet could belong to *“any study”* (see figure 10 below).



Figure 10: No clear branding.

#### Perceived target group:

- The group feel this leaflet is aimed at older teenagers and young adults. They feel the design is suited to the age group because the images are of real people and there are no *“babyish”* cartoons or animation (see figure 11 below). However, the people in the images are the wrong age for the target audience – the YRAs feel the people used were *“too old”*.



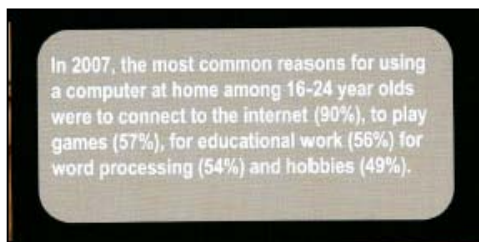
Figure 11: Images of older teenagers and adults.

#### Design:

- The group feel the leaflet looks good overall and the colours draw the reader in.
- There is too much black used throughout and is considered off putting. They suggest more neutral colours. Similarly, the use of pink gives the impression of a female focus that may not be appealing for boys. The group suggest adding a picture with both genders on the front cover to ensure it appeals to everyone (see figure 9 above).

*Font:*

- The group found the font difficult to read in places (see figure 12 below).



*Figure 12: Font difficult to read.*

*Images:*

- The images do not look professional. When discussing this, one YRA felt the images had been taken directly from Google Images which was a negative thing (see figure 13 below).



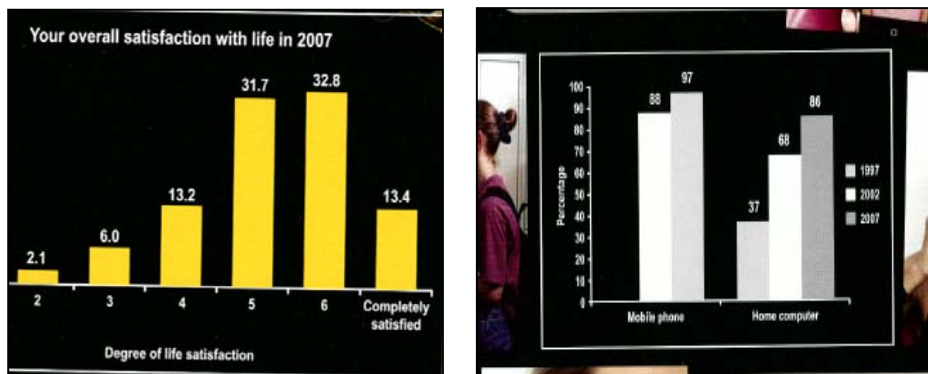
*Figure 13: Examples of images used.*

*Layout:*

- Overall, the group agreed that the layout of this leaflet should be simplified as it is busy.
- They discussed the graphs used to illustrate data in particular and felt they did not make sense and are hard to understand. They wanted the graphs to show percentages and not decimal points as this is much easier to read (see figure 14 and 15 below).



Figures 14 and 15: Complicated graphs.



- Some of the group feel the header and footer on the front page does not add anything and could be deleted (see figure 9 above).

*Content:*

- Some of the YRAs wanted the dialogue box on the front cover to be more interesting. Not having too much text on the front page was seen as a positive feature. The front page gives a clear indication of what is inside the leaflet which was a positive.
- The group enjoyed reading the brief anecdotes from teenagers and young adults throughout the leaflet. They liked this personal touch and felt it should be a feature of more leaflets as *"just giving facts can get boring"* (see figure 16 below).

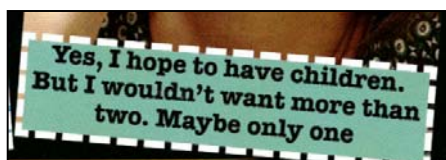


Figure 16: Anecdotes about young people

- The group liked being told about the outcomes of participation within the leaflet and thought this was a very effective way of encouraging young people to engage in the future.
- A suggested improvement is to link the reported statistics to where the reader could get more information about the topic.

*General comments:*

- They feel that getting the study findings out to participants in a timely fashion is important. When discussing this, the group felt participants *"may not care what happened a few years ago"* if it is left too late.
- The group feel they would be more inclined to take part if they were invited to participate at least once every two years, to keep up the momentum of engagement.



## 2. Children of the 90s

*Overall impact:*

- The general idea of the pack was seen as good as it gives a lot of background and information about 'what's next' (see figure 17 below). The pack is also seen as successful in making the reader feel important as a study participant.

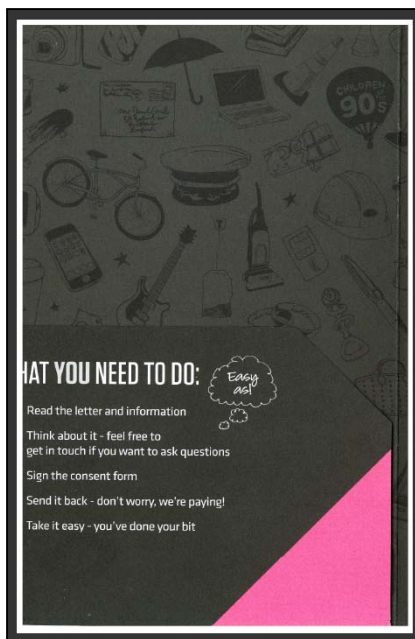


Figure 17: Inside cover of the leaflet indicating what the reader needs to do.

- The information is mainly clearly set out but there is too much of it in the long leaflet. There was a concern that there was too much information in the detailed booklet, and that people wouldn't be bothered to read it all.
- They were also concerned that from the main leaflet, it is not easy to grasp what this pack is about from a quick glance. Although the summary leaflet explains this well, this wouldn't help people who read the long one first.

*Perceived target group:*

- The group felt the pack is suited to the target audience (early 20s) due to the overall design (see figure 18 below).



Figure 18: Images of older young people used throughout.

*Design and layout:*

- The layout is simple, easy to read and gets to the point straight away which is really good.
- However, some aspects of the general style are overcrowded.
- The design is engaging and appropriate to the target group and for the purpose intended.
- The colours are not overbearing although some of the group felt too much pink is used (see figure 19 below). This is seen to alienate the boys.



*Figure 19: Colour pink used throughout the leaflet.*

*Font:*

- Simple font is used throughout and this was seen as being good.

*Images:*

- The pictures and sketches used throughout were seen to be relatable which was good (see figure 20 below). Using the same people in the images was regarded as a good approach.



*Figure 20: Images were viewed as relatable.*

*Content and language:*

- The group really liked how the pack outlines how this research will happen (see figure 17 above). However, some said the explanation of this could be clearer.
- Overall, the amount of information provided was not regarded as a good thing, and they were concerned that not everyone would read it all. For example, some were interested when they started reading it but said their interest dropped off because the leaflet was too long and said that they would not finish it. Some were concerned that they might have missed important information as there was too much to read.
- A summary booklet is a good idea in this context. However, this wouldn't help people who picked up the long booklet first and then stopped part way without having read the summary booklet. It may help to be directive about how the different documents should be used by the reader.

*General comments:*

- The audio CD was regarded as a useful addition to the pack itself.

### **3. Growing up in Ireland**

*Overall impact:*

- In general, young people would be pleased to receive a leaflet like this, which fed back findings from a study they were involved in "*I'd feel excited if I had had something to do with it*".
- The detail and diversity of content and design made a strong impression (see figure 21 below).



Figure 21: Front cover of GUI leaflet.

- Some were initially attracted and excited by the colourfulness and complexity of the leaflet design, but this abated somewhat when they tried to digest the detailed content, at which point they found the design features “too much” and somewhat off-putting. Other YRAs’ initial reactions were negative; they found the “busyness” of the design off-putting from the start “You’d get a headache after half an hour” (see figure 22 below).

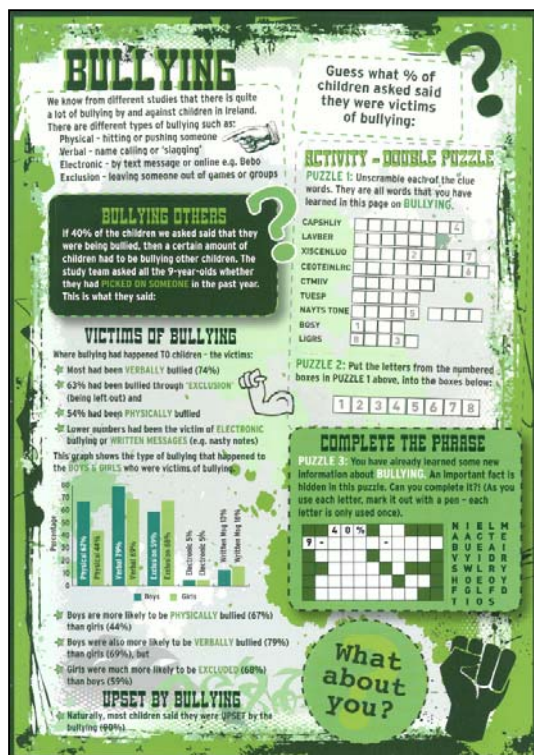


Figure 22: Busy content on page2 of GUI leaflet.

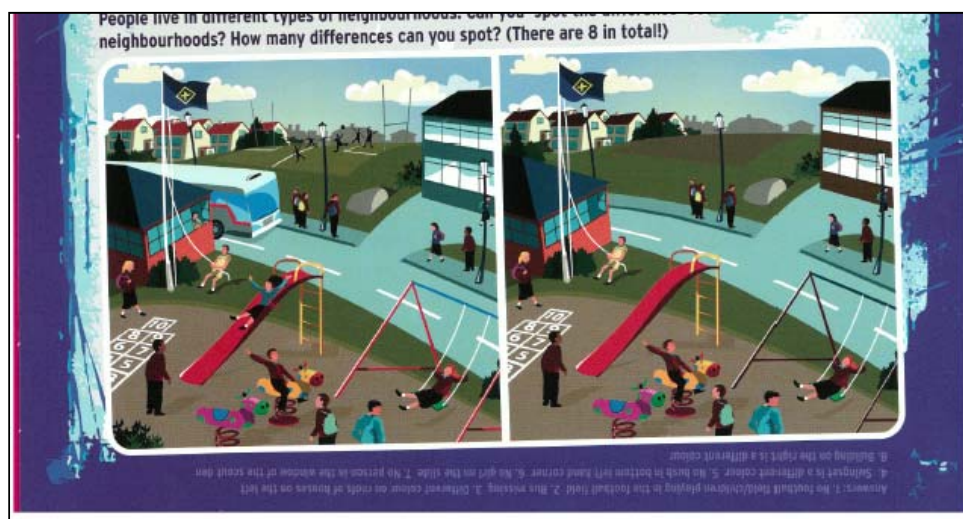
- Overall it was felt that the leaflet would work better if the design and content were generally “toned-down” streamlined and more focused on key messages.

#### Perceived target group:

- Some of the content (facts and figures) would be suitable for 13-14 year olds but perhaps hard for some 11 year olds to follow (see figure 22 above).
- The colours and use of cartoons were regarded as “babyish” and make it seem aimed at children under 13s. It would need to be “cooler” for 13-14 year olds and utilise more “sophisticated” design approaches (see figure 23 below).



**Figure 23: Use of cartoon like images.**



*Design and layout:*

- There is too much information crammed into the leaflet. It also utilises too many formats and design features, which is off-putting and makes it inaccessible and hard to read (see figure 22 above).
- Some liked the idea of the flaps they could lift up with content underneath and found this exciting and appealing, others found this content distracting. The flaps were also found to be very frustrating because they were hard to lift up.
- Use of borders around pages, and patterns in the background were distracting, and contributed to a “*cramped*” feel.
- The front cover was described as “*bold and bright*”, eye-catching and appealing. More images and less text would be appealing. The picture of the flap on the front is redundant, “*gets in the way*” and “*ruins the front cover*” (see figure 21 above).

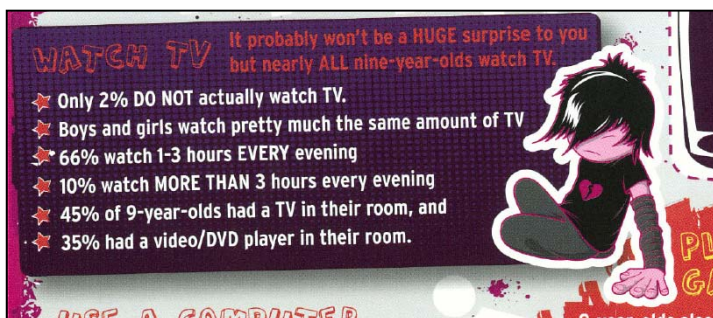
Font:

- It would be easier to read if there was more space added around text and if fonts were more consistent.
- Some of the text formats are hard to read, including: some of the coloured text on coloured backgrounds; hollow bubble writing; 3D writing ("*makes your eye's go funny*").

*Images:*

- Use of images of people was appealing, but need to be age appropriate. The cartoon images in the leaflet seemed suitable for children under 13 years. The image of the “gothic kid” used is better for 13-14 year olds. To appeal to 13-14s+ designers need to use “*well designed art*”, with more sophisticated designs/features (see figure 24 below).

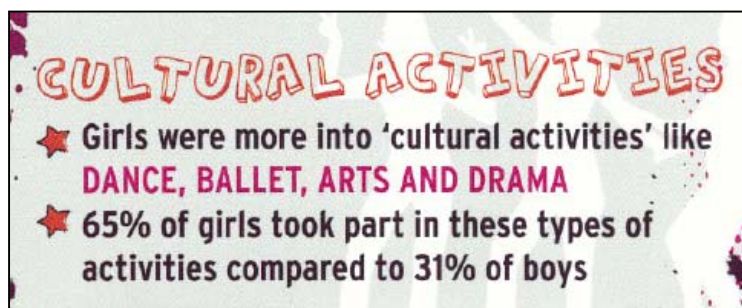
Figure 24: Image of “gothic” young person.



Content and language:

- The facts and findings were interesting to read, with some figures surprising and therefore especially interesting (see figure 25 below).

Figure 25: Examples of interesting findings.



- There are too many detailed figures, numbers and percentages which is off-putting for people who don't like statistics.
- The addition of humour would be welcomed “*more humour and less detail makes everything better*”.
- Findings on sensitive topics might worry or upset children. For example, when reading findings about obesity, a child might worry they were too fat, or they might be upset reading figures on levels of bullying.
- Some initially liked the idea of activities being included, but those who disliked activity books in general found this off-putting; most YRAs generally concluded that the activities distract from the main purpose of the leaflet.
- It was not obvious that the findings quoted had come from the study, and this should be explicitly stated otherwise some young people may not “*put two and two together*.”
- Inclusion of more specific information about what the findings have been used for would be helpful for engaging young people and encouraging them to take part in the future. Overall the design and inclusion of “*activities*” gave it a feel of a “*magazine*.” They felt something “*less magazine-like*” would work better in getting messages across clearly about the study – i.e. the extras detract from the communications rather than draw people into the message (see figure 26 below).

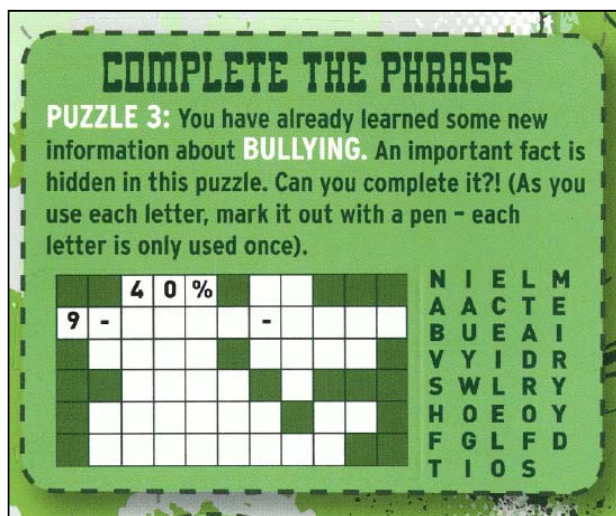


Figure 26: Example of the activities within the leaflet.

#### 4. Growing up in Australia

Overall impact:

- The leaflet in general is successful in making the reader feel “important” as a study member. This leaflet makes you feel a “part of something.” By feeding back about the study, the leaflet is backing up that the study has done what it said it would do. This makes the study feel worthwhile, and encourages the reader to trust the study.
- Some of the group felt that it would be nice to keep this leaflet as a memento of what they had taken part in.
- This leaflet makes “you want to read it as opposed to you having to read it”. The design is very appealing at first glance. The leaflet looks informal, not too serious and easy to read (see figure 27 below).



Figure 27: Front cover of GUA leaflet.



- The front cover is “*not the best*” because it is simple and the images do not appear to represent anything about the content of the leaflet or the study itself. However, the content and design inside is good and engaging.

#### Perceived target group:

- The whole design fits the 13/14 age group well however sometimes it is not clear who this leaflet is aimed at “*at times it feels like the child is the target group and sometimes the family because of the language used*”. The group felt that the target audience should be more clearly one or the other.

#### Font:

- The fonts used were very nice and easy to read.

#### Design and layout:

- There was a general feeling that the leaflet looked and felt inclusive; the reason why was difficult to pinpoint and but this was an overall impression. The length of the leaflet is good – not too long or too short (8 A5 pages).
- Gender neutral colours are used throughout and this was seen as being good and designed for everyone.
- Some of the content also gets lost in the design as it is quite “*busy*” (see figure 28 below).

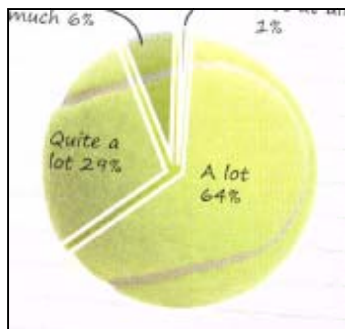
Figure 28: Inside pages of the GUA leaflet.





*Images:*

- The images were seen to be good but the group strongly felt that the images used did not reflect Australia. As the study is about Australians they felt it made sense to have more country specific images.
- The graphs and charts are really good as the presentation relates to the topic e.g. tennis ball pie chart for the sports data (see figure 29 below).



*Figure 29: Example of graphs used.*

*Content and language:*

- Some of the group felt the leaflet does not sufficiently reflect young people's experience as Australian children; they were worried that it "looks a bit touristy" because of the images used e.g. the sun, beach, and Polaroid theme (see figure 30 below). They also felt that the recipe is not Australian and seems to be vegetarian, which they felt is probably not reflective of most children's eating patterns in Australia.



Figure 30: Polaroid theme used throughout.

- The leaflet is interesting but would be nicer if “*it wasn’t so random*,” the logic behind the content was not obvious to young people. It would be better if the message is more “*direct*.”
- It was not clear why the leaflet reports on the chosen parts of the study; the reasoning should be made explicit. This adds to the feeling of “*randomness*”.
- There is too much “unnecessary” information which was distracting.
- The information is distributed throughout which keeps you interested.
- Mother’s day activity was seen as good as it lets you learn something new (see figure 31 below).



Figure 31: Mother's day activity.

- The introduction was seen as being very good because it gives context to the study.
- The introduction shows the study team which is really good as it connects you to the study and helps increase trust in the study (see figure 32 below).

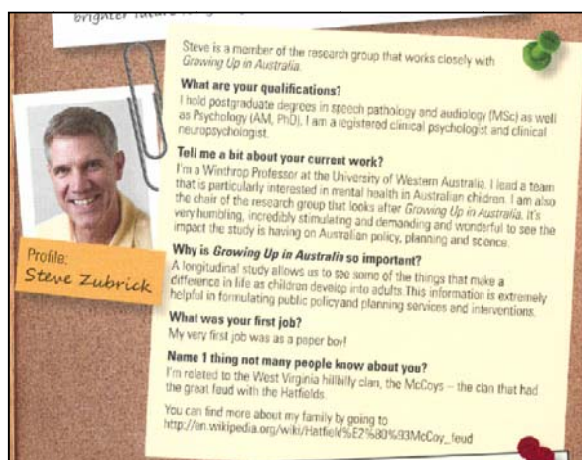


Figure 32: About the study team.

- However, some thought this leaflet might be confusing for younger children as there is quite a lot going on with not much explanation (e.g. the cooking recipe appears “randomly”) therefore it might be better to explain the format explicitly at the beginning (see figure 33 below).

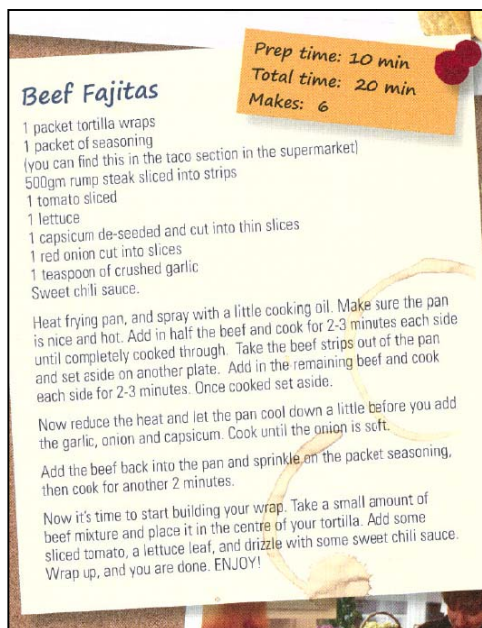


Figure 33: Cooking recipe.

*General comments:*

- Back page is plain but good as it is to the point. The link to the website is good as you know exactly where to go for more information (see figure 34 below).
- The information on the back helps give context to the study and provides details about who to contact for help.



Figure 34: Back page.

## 5. Millennium Cohort Study

### Overall impact:

- Overall YRA members felt the leaflet is too basic for them. However, it should be borne in mind that the YRA members participating in the discussion were aged 13-18, whilst the leaflet is aimed at 12 year olds. However, there was a sense that the content and design is the simplest of all leaflets and that it is too simple (see figure 35 below).



Figure 35: Front cover of MCS leaflet.

- The leaflet is not felt to be effective at making people feel part of the study because it is so basic and really does not tell you very much.
- It is interesting but young people were not sure it includes enough to make a teenager feel a part of the study.
- The leaflet is very easy to understand.

### Perceived target group:

- The design of this leaflet felt “*about right for this age group*” (under 12s) but it was still seen to be a very simple design and perhaps too simple.

### Font:

- There were no comments on the font

### Images:

- The images used were considered to be good as they suited the topic of what jobs and careers young people want to have.



### Design and layout:

- The leaflet does not include enough text (see figure 36 below).



Figure 36: Inside cover of the MCS leaflet.

- The background is too plain and should be made more eye-catching.
- Blue does not seem a good choice of colour because it can be seen a boys' colour which could alienate the girls.

### Content and language:

- The leaflet does not remind you what the study is for which is not helpful; there should be more context information provided.
- It might be good for the people who took part but *"even then it's a bit so what?"* because it does not say what the relevance is of the information being presented.
- The name of the study is good as it indicates what the study is about. However, the group stated that they would not like to be called a *"child"* after a certain age (such as 12/13).
- The logo was seen as being *"boring"*.
- The leaflet only reports on this one aspect of the study (i.e. specific findings about what careers children and young people want to have). YRAs say this gives the impression that the study team have just *"published what they want."* There needs to be a clearer explanation as to why these particular findings have been chosen to share.
- This focus was seen as interesting in the sense that it makes the reader reflect on your young years. However it provides very basic and obvious information – nothing new or special – and is therefore perhaps not a great choice of content. The group felt the leaflet is stereotypical as it reports on *"girls' jobs and boys' jobs"* and sets up quite a divide. This reinforces gender stereotypes which were seen as inappropriate for the study to be doing.

*General feedback:*

- The group felt that because it was so simple they would read this leaflet once and then not look at it again.

## Objective 1.4 Providing feedback on the Growing up in Australia study engagement gift pack

### Methodology

A total of six YRAs participated in this session. This group was asked to briefly discuss their impressions of a gift pack for young people from the Growing up in Australia study. They were asked to consider what they liked/disliked about the pack and whether they felt the pack was engaging for young people.

The gift pack contained a measuring tape, headphones, a wall calendar, coloured pens, a wallet, a drawstring bag and a mouse pad. This session lasted 20 minutes and took place at the June session.

### Key recommendations – Objective 1.4

- The YRAs felt that the use of a gift pack is an effective method for at engaging young people in longitudinal studies. They felt that by sending thank you gifts it shows a sense of appreciation from the study team to the participant which is very positive.
- They liked a lot of variety in the gift pack.
- They liked to see the branding colours prominent throughout each of the gifts if possible. This helps to reinforce the study identify and make the young person “*feel a part of the study*”.
- The gifts should be largely relevant to young people e.g. a mouse pad is not relevant as most young people have laptops or use mobile phones to access the internet.

### Detailed findings – Objective 1.4

Findings from a discussion group about the Growing up in Australia study gift pack:

#### ***What was good about the pack?***

- The YRAs like that every gift matches the colour scheme of the study.
- The wallet is regarded as nice and bright which suits a sunny country like Australia – but they said it might be a bit too bright for England.
- Everyone really likes the headphones and thinks including these is a brilliant idea.
- The coloured pens are good and liked by the whole group.
- They like the drawstring bag and would use it.
- The older group members like the big calendar and would use it on their walls; the younger group members feel it was a bit too big and would have preferred a calendar that they can put on their desk.
- Everyone likes the way the days are laid out because you can cross the days off as they pass.
- They like that the images of the seasons reflected the weather in Australia i.e. they have summer when it is our winter.



***What was not good about the pack?***

- The mouse pad is thought to be the worst item in the pack and somewhat out of date: *“no one uses mouse pads anymore they have laptops and mobiles”*. The group feels that a USB stick would be a better gift.
- The group raised the point that if the full name of the study was on every gift then other people might begin to quiz them on their involvement. The older members of the group feel this could be OK and said they might feel proud to be noticed as involved in the study by others. However, the younger group members stated that they would not like the attention.
- Also, some raised the point that including the study name could be problematic if it is not appealing for young people. For example, they said that if it is something like ‘child of the new century’ then the young person might not want to keep it if it implied they were a child.

## **Aim 2: To generate ideas for specific engagement approaches for the Millennium Cohort Study and Understanding Society cohort study.**

To address aim 2 the YRAs participated in two sessions which were designed to address each of the two objectives under this aim.

The session methodologies for objectives 2.1 and 2.2 are presented below followed by the key recommendations from the YRAs' feedback. This is then followed by a more detailed summary of the feedback for each study.

### **Objective 2.1 Exploring perceived challenges associated with engagement of young people in longitudinal studies**

### **Objective 2.2 Exploring ideas for how young people could successfully be retained/engaged in the two longitudinal studies: MCS and Understanding Society**

#### **Methodology**

The group of 11 YRAs was asked to discuss what they felt the challenges of engaging participants are within these types of studies.

Following this brief discussion they were split into two smaller groups of five and six to participate in an in depth discussion regarding engaging young people in one of two longitudinal studies (MCS or the Understanding Society study). The purpose of the discussion groups was to think about engagement with longitudinal studies and specifically how the two studies can engage young people over the years.

- The group discussing Understanding Society consisted mainly of 15-17 year olds.
- The group discussing the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) consisted mainly of 12-14 year olds.

This session lasted 1 hour and took place in the May meeting.

## Key recommendations – Objective 2.1 and 2.2

Overall key findings from the discussion groups on both studies are summarised here. In the instances where feedback was specific to one of the studies this is indicated.

### Study design

- The content of any questionnaires should be relevant to young people otherwise they will not see the value in completing it. As well as being interesting, any accompanying letters or information should be also to the point and interesting.
- It is important that fieldwork periods do not clash with their exam periods.
- Young people favoured choice in terms of survey mode – for example, options for both paper and online.
- YRAs stressed the importance of ensuring young people were told that their answers were confidential from their parents in order to elicit honest responses. Understanding Society: The questionnaires should be tailored to suit the needs of the two target age groups i.e. 10-12 year olds should receive a shorter, simpler version of the questionnaire whilst 13-15 year olds could receive a longer more complicated survey.

### Retaining participants/increasing engagement:

- The group felt that giving as much detail as possible of the significance of their involvement in the study may help to retain them in the study.
- One suggestion was the use of a DVD which could be sent in a pack or made available on a participant's website. This could highlight any positive differences that their involvement has made. They may also find it useful/interesting to see other participants and what their experience is like/what they got out of it. A video was felt to be a more engaging method, especially for this age group, than a leaflet. Hosting the video on the study website was also seen as a way to make the website more engaging as some of the group felt that since participants would only be asked to engage annually in the research they probably would not look on the website with any regularity.
- It was suggested that engagement could be increased if research participants were sent birthday postcards or exam well wishes. This demonstrates interest in them as individuals and young people and what they may be experiencing over time. By building these relationships with the young people it will mean that they are more likely to remain engaged.
- The YRAs thought that the participants may like to receive a phone call from one of the researchers to thank them for taking part and to show that they appreciate their involvement. It would be an opportunity to discuss how their involvement would be about to change. By having a phone call the young people thought they would feel more 'special' and valued, and therefore more likely to continue. Having correspondence from the same researcher who phoned them would also be good, so that they could feel as though they were building a relationship with the researcher. An established relationship would keep young people engaged.

- MCS: The group felt that the best part of being in a club is meeting the other members and sharing a common interest. In this context they did not feel that MCS warranted being a club because you are not able to meet the other members. However, the group would use an MCS membership card but only if it had a purpose e.g. it had their website login details on it.
- Participants may get bored of taking part in the same type of data collection so introducing new methods may be an effective way of renewing their interest.
- Issues of confidentiality and anonymity should be constantly reviewed and participants should be told that their data is always secure. By not making this clear on a regular basis participants may worry that their data is not secure leading them to lose trust in the study as a whole.
- It is important for young people to be engaged as individuals on a voluntary basis, separate from their parents. The group suggested that the study team should engage directly with children from a young age (e.g. by asking the young people individually if they are happy to take part in the research and developing materials specifically aimed at them) because if they have always been seen as being important and 'individual' to the study then they may be more likely to continue to complete the survey as they get older.

#### **Social media:**

- The group felt that positing interesting statistics of study findings on the study Twitter feed could be a useful way of keeping participants up to date. They much preferred Twitter over Facebook as the best avenue to do this.
- MCS: The MCS group preferred the use of Facebook over Twitter. Although they were aware that not all young people use Facebook, so any information placed on Facebook needs to be equally available via other means.

#### **Incentives:**

- The group felt that participants would want to be rewarded for taking part and agreed that vouchers were a good way to do this. By including extras like stickers and badges in the letter with the questionnaire it would also encourage young people to complete the survey and help to make them feel valued. They wanted participants who had stayed in the study for several years to be rewarded additionally for their loyalty. Providing other events like a conference were also mentioned as a means of encouraging young people to remain engaged.
- MCS: The promise of money was favoured to keep them involved. However, sweets, magnets, mugs, tangles, t-shirts, and stress dolls all with the study logo on were also suggested as items that might work as appealing and age-appropriate thank you gifts.

### **Keeping in touch materials:**

- Understanding society and MCS: The YRAs felt that sending the participants a newsletter or some type of keeping in touch information could help to make them feel special, keep them engaged and to inform them of interesting developments. They all agreed that any information should be tailored specifically to this age group. Participants could also be asked to contribute information to the newsletter about their experiences in the study.
- MCS: The group felt that participants would want to be contacted by the study team to help them feel reassured that they had not been forgotten or “*used*”. Contact about two or three times a year was deemed appropriate.
- MCS: The length of the communication should be short but not so short that the user deems it a waste of time. Informal communications were deemed more suitable to the age group than formal ones.

### **Post**

- Post was seen as the best medium for receiving information about the study. The group reported hardly ever getting any post directed to them so felt the possibility of this happening was very exciting.
- The groups all agreed that receiving post makes them “*feel special*” and suggested that 13 is a suitable age to start receiving your own post. They suggested that the study team should attempt to collect the young people’s contact details prior to this age. If parents refused to give their child’s contact details for the next survey they would be asked each year until they agreed.

### **Website:**

- The YRAs felt a website would be useful to share information and to provide updates.
- MCS: The group felt that the study website should have one section for the young people and one for parents so that the content and language is tailored to the user.
- MCS: A number of specific features were highlighted as welcome. One suggestion was for a games section. YRAs said that other websites they visit usually have some form of interactive games or videos and this is something they would expect to see. They would also welcome a “meet the team” section because seeing pictures of the team and learning about them could create a sense of approachability and trust in the study. They would also like to have access to a private chat room for study participants to share experiences.

## Detailed findings: Objective 2.1

Findings from a brief discussion group brainstorming the main challenges associated with engagement in longitudinal research:

The YRAs discussed several reasons why participants may choose to disengage with longitudinal studies. They felt that the main challenges of engaging participants in longitudinal research are:

- Participants could get annoyed at doing the same research over and over and not want to continue. This indicates that the YRAs feel that introducing new methods of data collection throughout the study could be a useful way to keep participants engaged.
- Participants' attitudes may change towards the study over time leading them to feel less interested in taking part.
- Participants might worry about their privacy leading them to drop out of the study. This not only highlights the need for confidentiality and anonymity but the importance of how the study team conveys this to participants.
- Participants might worry they are not allowed to leave the study. The YRAs were keen to state that participants should never be made to feel under pressure to remain in the study.
- The research team might change over time and interpret the data differently. Although this point does not relate directly to participant engagement the group were keen to state that keeping participants informed of how their data is being analysed is important as not being transparent could lead to disengagement.

## Detailed findings: Objective 2.2

Feedback from the two discussion groups exploring ideas for how young people could successfully be retained/engaged in longitudinal studies.

### ***1. Understanding Society enhancing engagement discussion group:***

The key issues explored with young people:

- How to encourage 10-15 year olds to complete the self-completion questionnaire? (E.g. make them feel important so their contribution is valued).
- How to encourage young people to make the transition from age 15 to the adult interview (i.e. not to refuse to be interviewed, or to be unavailable, once they turn 16, and thereafter).
- How to encourage young people to remain in contact and responsive to the survey after they leave home (i.e. to continue to participate, even when they are living away from home and it was at home that their family first became engaged with the study).

Young people's suggestions to the Understanding Society study team regarding these issues are outlined below.

#### ***a) How to encourage 10-15 year olds to fill out the questionnaire?***

- Tailor the design and content of the questionnaires for young people.
- There needs to be two different questionnaires for different age groups. A survey for 10 year olds will need to be shorter and simpler. Ten and 15 year olds should not have the same questionnaire because their level of understanding is at a higher level. The group discussed different age groupings and in general it was agreed that 10 to 12 year olds should receive a shorter, simpler version of the questionnaire while the 13 to 15 year olds could have a longer, more complicated survey.
- You need to make the questionnaire look interesting otherwise young people simply will not complete it. As much as possible try and make the content/questions as interesting and relevant as possible. Young people will be more inclined to complete the questionnaire if they see the relevance of the questions they are being asked.
- Any information provided should be kept brief and to the point but also interesting.
- The YRAs felt it would be best to offer the choice of completing a paper questionnaire or an on-line questionnaire. For some they would prefer to get a paper copy as if it was sent to them in the post they would be more likely to complete it once they opened it up, but for others, they would prefer to go on-line as they did not want to spend lots of time writing and preferred to type.
- It is important for young people to be engaged as individuals on a voluntary basis, separate from their parents. Since parents are given the main information about the study, the YRAs wondered if young people might feel like there was an element of 'having' to take part in the research. They felt that young people may not feel like they have a choice in taking part, as it is something that their parents have agreed to do on their behalf. As the young people get older this may cause more problems as the young people start to 'rebel' against their parents' wishes. One way of overcoming this would be to ask the young people individually if they are happy to take part in the research and develop materials specifically aimed at them, even for the 10 year olds. If they have always been seen as being important and 'individual' to the study then they may be more likely to continue to complete the survey as they get older.
- The group also discussed when it would be appropriate for the young people to receive something directly from the researchers, rather than being presented something by their parents. For 13 to 15 year olds information should be addressed to the young person in their own name as this is more engaging and makes you feel special. From age 13, or as early as possible, the YRAs thought they would like to receive their own post. Therefore, the researchers need to start planning to gain consent to contact the young people directly as early as possible. The YRAs agreed that some parents may not grant this consent but felt it might need to be a rolling consent, i.e. if parents refused to give their child's contact details for the next survey they would be asked each year until they agreed.
- The YRAs were also concerned about how honest a young person would be using the current process. They wondered if having the parents see the questionnaire first might mean that the young people were less honest. They felt it would be better to give the questionnaire to the young people as soon as possible. The YRAs agreed that it was OK for a parent to give you the questionnaire but by the age of 15 (and for some young people even earlier) they would want to have it sent directly to them with their own information.
- The young people discussed how to keep the interest of participants in Understanding Society – one of the suggestions was more information. They worried whether it would be difficult to catch the interest of a 10 year old but felt if the researchers

managed to do this then that 10 year old would be more likely to remain engaged throughout their life. One idea the group came up with was to have an engaging video each year to show how important their involvement is e.g. A DVD which could be sent in a pack and hosted on the website to show the difference and significance of their involvement. If participants know that their role is important then they are more likely to continue. They may also find it useful/interesting to see other participants and what their experience is like/what they got out of it. A DVD was felt to be a more engaging method, especially for this age group than a leaflet.

- The use of the website as an engagement tool produced a difference of opinion amongst the YRAs. Some of the group felt that they would probably look at the website to find out more information about the study (although all agreed this would depend on how interactive and interesting the website was). However, others felt that since they would only be asked to engage annually in the research they probably would not look on the website with any regularity. However, in general they felt that a website for research participants could be used to update information about what difference their input has made.
- With regards to social media, they did not see a use for Facebook but thought potentially Twitter could be used to promote results and statistics from the study. For example, there could be a statistic of the week circulated to the Twitter followers.
- The YRAs wanted to be rewarded for taking part and felt the voucher was appropriate. They also wondered if they could be offered some kind of accreditation or additional incentives the longer they took part in the research (one member talked about the blood donor accreditation scheme i.e. after so many years of being involved you get an additional reward). They felt that this might encourage young people to take part, especially if it could be seen as something they could add to their CV/university applications. By including extras like stickers and badges in the letter with the questionnaire it would also encourage young people to complete the survey and help to make them feel valued.
- The group talked about reasons why they attended the YRA meetings so regularly to see if any learning could be transferred. The reasons they gave for coming to the meetings were:
  - Enjoyment
  - Personal advantage
  - Learning transferable skills
  - The YRA is a 'proper' role and so they do it to the best of their ability
  - They feel privileged and valued
  - It is time away from studies/opportunity to think about something different
- While some of these points may not be transferrable to encouraging research participants to remain engaged there are still some important points raised by the YRAs. For example, making it enjoyable; personal advantage; being made to feel privileged and valued; and time out from other activities. Providing other events like a conference were also mentioned as a means of encouraging young people to remain engaged.



**b) *How to encourage young people to transition from the child survey to the adult interview at 16?***

- The YRAs thought that they would like to receive a phone call from one of the researchers to thank them for taking part and to show that they appreciate their involvement. It would be an opportunity to discuss how their involvement would be about to change. By having a phone call the young people thought they would feel more 'special' and valued, and therefore more likely to continue. Also having the opportunity to discuss the changes in the research format for the young people may help to ease any uncertainties or fears that the young research participants may have. For some using the word 'interview' may put them off taking part in the future, but if someone took the time to carefully explain this to them they may be more likely to remain engaged.
- Having correspondence from the same researcher who phoned them would also be good, so that they could feel as though they were building a relationship with the researcher. An established relationship would keep young people engaged. They would want this person to be kind and happy and not patronising – they would want them to be able to relate to young people and to be approachable.
- The group talked about the researcher for the young person being different from that of the rest of the family. It was agreed that it should be the same researcher as it would be easier to build up the relationship with them. However, it would need to be stressed to the young people the professionalism of the researcher and that what the young person tells the researcher will be confidential and that their parents will not be told.
- Another suggestion was to receive a newsletter to tell the research participants more about what is going on. The YRAs felt that this should be two or three times a year, although they would only want to see something if the researchers had something to say. They all agreed that any information should be tailored specifically to this age group. Participants could be asked to contribute information e.g. how they found the transition from the 10-15 questionnaire to the adult interview; and what benefits they have had out of being involved in the research. Young people are more likely to listen to other young people rather than researchers telling them what the benefits are.
- The YRAs felt that at age 16 you are busy with a job, school work, social life etc. and wondered whether 1 hour may put some people off. They also cautioned that it was important to think carefully about timings – especially, for example, considering exam times. They thought that after exams it would be fine to be contacted but ideally not too late in August when they are trying to enjoy summer/time off.
- The information letters/leaflets were shown to the group. They felt that the design could be improved as the writing was very small and not very accessible. Generally they felt that there was sufficient information in the letters, and they liked the facts on the right hand column as a way of enticing young people to read more. It was felt that it was about the right length – you do not want to be given too much information as you will not read it all and then you might miss some important information. They felt that the design would probably work better for the 10 to 15 year olds, it was felt to be a bit childish for the 16 plus age group.
- To try and encourage young people to stay engaged the researchers should tailor the information to each young person. So pick different statistics that relate to the answers that that young person has given in the survey. By doing this the information

will be more interesting and relevant to each person. Therefore, there would be several different information sheets which could be sent to the 'right' audience.

**c) *How to remain in contact once young people leave home?***

- Young people might think 'why should I continue'? YRA members suggested that if you felt like you were helping to produce results then you would keep doing it – you need to know what difference you are making and what the research participants will get out of continuing their involvement.
- Engagement could be effective if researchers related to young people with an awareness of the different life stages in a young person's life. For example, research participants could be sent a 'Good luck in your exams' card, and a 'Happy Birthday' card. By building these relationships with the young people it will mean that they are more likely to remain engaged.
- Also offering longer term incentives may keep people engaged. By telling young people at the age of 16 that if they are still involved in the research at age 18 they will receive an additional £50 voucher as thank you for their support. Similarly, at age 18 if they are still involved at age 21 they will receive an additional voucher or incentive.
- They also discussed the £5 thank you for the change of address card and whether you would be motivated to send it back. In general the group felt that the £5 incentive was a good way at encouraging young people to let the researchers know about any changes of address, but that if you were not already engaged in the study it would not make that much difference. It was more important to make young people feel like they were getting something out of taking part and wanted to remain engaged.

**2. *Millennium Cohort Study enhancing engagement discussion group:***

The key issues explored with young people:

- What role do "keeping in touch" communications need to play in engagement?
- What type of communications should be sent, what should they contain, and how often should they be sent?
- What could be the role of different types of media?
- What else is important to engaging young people? For example, is the concept of membership relevant? What types of incentives or thank you gifts are important?
- What barriers to participation should be borne in mind?
- What should the role of parents be in mediating communications?

Young people's suggestions to the MCS study team regarding these issues are outlined below.

**a) *How are keeping in touch communications important?***

- The group felt that participants would want to be contacted by the study team to help them feel their participation is worthwhile and appreciated. The reasons for this included being reassured that the study had not forgotten about them or "*used them*". It was important to the group that the study team continuously expresses their appreciation. They did not want to feel like they helped the study and were then forgotten about as this would reflect very badly on the study and put them off future engagement.

- They stressed the importance of feedback about how much impact their involvement was having and how much good they are doing. They wanted statistics in the keeping in touch mailings but also actual evidence of impact to help convince them that participation is worthwhile.

*b) What type of communication should be sent and how often?*

- The group felt that “keeping in touch” communications should be kept simple. Communications should be neither “*too long*” (because too time consuming to read) nor “*too short*” as this can appear as a waste of time.
- The group understood that the findings in the keeping in touch mailings were reporting on previous year’s responses. However, they still wanted this to be explained in an explicit manner so that it is easier to read the content in context. They felt that if this was not explained properly then the leaflets could be easily dismissed as “*not relevant*” to them.
- The group felt that informal communications were better than formal ones as they were easier to read and understand. They also felt that using humour is a good way to engage young people.
- The group wanted regular communications. They did not want to be bombarded with communications every time they accessed their emails but some form of communication every few months was deemed appropriate (suggestions ranged from once every month to every few months).

*c) What role might different approaches to communication play? Packs through the Post? Online? Website? Via social media sites?*

*Information by post:*

- Post is regarded as the priority media. The group appreciated having a “*physical thing*” in their hand and regarded it as “*impactful*”. They were in favour of having things sent in the post. They also reported hardly ever getting any post directed to them so felt the possibility of this happening was very exciting.

*Email:*

- Email is not a favoured mechanism of communication. They explained that not all young people have email accounts, and that those who do may not necessarily check email regularly. They said young people probably only check their email once a week or so, and could easily miss emails, or mistake it for junk mail.

*Website:*

- One of the group suggested that there could be a private section of the website just for the study members which would feel more inclusive. They liked the idea of having their own login.
- Having a parent’s zone and a young people zone was seen as useful as the information would be more likely to be targeted to the appropriate age group.
- In addition to the private zones on the website they would like to see a games section. The other websites they visit usually have some form of interactive games or videos and this is something they would expect to see. Interactive games would also make them more likely to want to re-visit the site.

- They wanted a 'meet the team' section on the website. They wanted to see the study team and learn more about them e.g. a fun fact about themselves to create a sense of approachability. This also increases trust in the study and makes them feel more included as a participant.

*Interactive chat-rooms:*

- The idea of being able to relate to other participants was very popular. The group wanted to meet other study members and create a community. If this was not possible they also liked the idea of a chat room on the website exclusive to the members. There was some debate about how this would work best in terms of registering members and moderating the chat room.
- The group were keen to discuss the security and safety of online chat rooms. They wanted to know that they were safe online and expected an online moderator to monitor the discussions.

*Social media:*

- The group liked the idea of having a Facebook page. They highlighted that young people are allowed to use Facebook from age 13.
- They described how a Facebook page could be useful in sending out 'on the spot updates' to the user's newsfeed which the young person may receive notifications about. This would be a more proactive way of communicating with young people, compared to the website which would rely on greater user proactively accessing it. The group felt that the Facebook page could be used to post a status and brief information along with a web link back to the website where fuller information would be provided. This would not only increase awareness of the study among Facebook users but increase traffic to the website. They felt that the timeline aspect of Facebook could fit well with the longitudinal nature of the study and sharing on overview of what has happened overtime.
- Young people are used to company Facebook pages and often "like" them. Many also access their Facebook several times a day, although it is highlighted that not all use Facebook, so any information placed on Facebook needs to be equally available via other means.
- The group did not favour Twitter as relevant social media platform for the study. They said that people their age do not use Twitter very much, although some used it to communicate with small groups of friends, or followed celebrities. By and large, Twitter is seen as being more relevant to older people.

**d) What else is important to engaging young people? "Membership"? Incentives?**

- The group members belonged to several other clubs such as a drama club, music clubs and football clubs. The reflected that key features of being in a club are meeting the other members and sharing a common interest. In this context they did not feel that MCS warranted being a club because you are not able to meet the other members. The group really did like the idea of the online chat rooms though and perhaps that would be more fitting with the idea of feeling like a member of something special.
- The group was very enthusiastic about meeting other people in the study and wanted the study to organise parties and meet ups to accommodate this by area. They felt

that meeting up with other study participants would be a useful way to compare experiences as being a part of the study is such a unique experience in itself. They wanted to socialise with other families and young people.

- The idea of having a membership card was not favoured as such (it was felt to be pointless and gimmicky). However more favoured would be a membership card that served a practical purpose such as providing log in details for the website. The group would not keep a membership card just “*for the sake of it*” but would keep it if it had a purpose.
- Young people discussed what kind of incentives would keep them interested. The promise of money was favoured to keep them involved. However, sweets, magnets, mugs, tangles and stress dolls were also suggested as items that might work as appealing and age-appropriate thank you gifts. They also liked the idea of having a t-shirt with the study logo on it.
- The group did not like the idea of being called ‘special children’. They felt this sounded strange and somewhat patronising. They felt it helpful to stress that the study is special and that young people are part of something special, but it is clear that the use of language needs to be applied carefully.

*e) What potential barriers to participation need to be borne in mind?*

- The group was asked about the barriers in their lives that may stop them from participating in this study. The key barriers identified were a lack of interest in the study due to competing priorities and exam pressures.
- They wanted the study to acknowledging the fact that they are busy people with busy lives. They wanted to feel that the study appreciates them taking the time out to participate. January, February, October, May and June were identified as particularly bad months to be contacted as these are usually when exams are being held.

*f) What should the role of parents be in mediating communications?*

- They liked the idea of having post directed to them without having to go through their parents. They felt more “*grown up*” receiving their own post. If the letters must go through the parent then they at least wanted their own envelope with their name on it. There was some discussion on whether the parents should give permission for this to happen – some agreed the parents should give permission but it was noted this process would be quite long.
- Views on the appropriate role of parents in supporting safety in chat rooms were mixed. Some felt that parents should be able to have access to the chat rooms to ensure the young person’s safety, but others felt that it would be important for young people that their space was private and NOT accessed by parents.

## **Aim 3: To understand young people's views and use of different communication mechanisms and the role of these in their lives**

To address aim 3 the YRAs participated in two sessions which were designed to address each of the two objectives under this aim.

The session methodologies for objectives 3.1 and 3.2 are presented below followed by the combined key recommendations from the YRAs feedback. This is then followed by a more detailed summary of the YRAs' feedback.

### **Objective 3.1 Exploring how young people use different communication media**

### **Objective 3.2 Exploring young people's views of different communication media and which they prefer for different purposes**

#### **Methodology**

The YRAs were set a pre-task in preparation for this session. For this pre-task they were asked to keep a record of their communication use over a period of two days of their choice (one weekday and one day over the weekend - please see appendix A for a summary of the completed pre-tasks). The facilitators collected the pre-tasks and collated the feedback to provide starter points for the discussion groups.

On the day of the session, the YRAs participated in a facilitated discussion exploring their use of different media, their views of each and the role it plays in their lives. To help stimulate discussion, the groups were also given statements about young people's media use and asked to consider whether they agreed or disagreed with each one.

For this session the YRA members were split in to two pre-determined groups of five and six for this session. For the purposes of reporting the group's feedback has been combined as the feedback/themes were very similar and are set out in detail below in order of the communication methods discussed.

The session lasted 1 hour and took place in the June meeting.

## Key recommendations – Objective 3.1 and 3.2

- Post has a limited communication function in the YRA's lives. For example, it is mainly used for receiving bank statements, information from clubs, or sending/receiving occasional personal things like birthday cards. However, partly because of this, they like to receive post and regard this as "*exiting*" and "*personal*."
- For regular day to day communication, the YRAs mainly use three types of media: instant messaging - for quick and frequent contact; telephone - if they need an immediate answer or want to chat or discuss something in more detail; and to some extent email.
- YRAs use a variety of forms of instant messenger communication depending on who/what they are texting, and the compatibility of the two parties' devices: e.g. "*text to mum if it's a quick thing, BBM to friends who have blackberry's, WhatsApp to friends who have an iPhone, Facebook message if it's not urgent, Snapchat<sup>17</sup> to send a picture*".
- When using the phone, young people tend to like to use their own mobile phones over the household landline, but will use the latter if the call is likely to be expensive and they don't want to use up their free minutes.
- Young people tend to have one main email account which they check most regularly, plus between two and five others that they use for specific things or to sign up for to access a website e.g. YouTube.
- Social media is also an important part of the YRA's lives in terms of social engagement, but is treated somewhat warily, due to the extent to which it is a public forum, especially by older age groups.
- The YRAs said that the popularity of different social media sites changes frequently over time with Twitter currently being most popular and regarded as most "*cool*". Its attractions include perceived greater exclusivity (they described it as more of a "*private closed forum*"), and the ability to follow/be followed which is "*fun*."
- Facebook is still popular among many, but its more public-facing function means the YRAs, especially older members of the group, are wary of what they post on there. They feel they have to present a particular "*image*" – for example, they need to look cool or popular among peers.
- By 14+, young people are usually free to use the internet without permission. They mainly use the internet on laptops or phones, with younger groups more likely to use laptops and older group members more likely to use phones.
- In terms of leisure usage, they said they tend to visit particular websites they like rather than browse the internet.

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<sup>17</sup> [www.snapchat.com](http://www.snapchat.com)

- Most YRAs trust well established online communication channels and websites from organisations they are familiar with, but the group – especially its older members – have a strong awareness of potential risks, particularly relating to potential misuse of their personal information.

## Detailed findings – Objective 3.1 and 3.2

Findings from two discussion groups exploring the role of media and communications in young people's lives. Please see appendix B for a list of the different communications discussed by the YRAs and a brief description of their purpose.

### 1. *What role does post play in your life?*

*Overall role and views:*

- Everyone in the group likes to receive post. The entire group stated that no matter what post is delivered to their house they will *"always open it and read it"*. This is as opposed to receiving an email which they may delete without opening. The group said that receiving a physical thing is good because they pay more attention to it. The older group members said that receiving post is more meaningful than receiving an email because it shows that *"extra care"* to take the time out to write to someone. They said that hand written letters are especially nice to receive.
- None of the group mind getting the same information simultaneously by email and post. However, they said that communications via post and also email should decrease as they get more familiar with the organisation or club.
- As much as they like to receive post, no one in the group would think to send a letter in the first instance for regular communications. They prefer to use email, text or their mobile phone to communicate. However, if the matter is very important to them, or the matter was particular personal, then sending a hand written letter is regarded as a nice idea and some of the group have done this before. If it was a long letter then they would type it up and post it rather than write it by hand, but again only if it is extremely important or personal.

*Types of post commonly received:*

- The group most commonly receive the following types of post:
  - Bank statements
  - Letters from their school or prospective universities
  - Free samples of things they have signed up for online e.g. shampoo or make up testers
  - Updates. Newsletters, meeting details and reviews from clubs they are members of
  - Mail order catalogues that they have signed up for

**Explore the statement:** *"Young people like getting post more than email"*

**YRA feedback:** The entire group agrees that they like to receive post more than email as it more enjoyable and exiting. In general, they would prefer to send email/texts over sending letters but would send a letter if the subject matter was very important to them.



## **2. What role does instant messaging (e.g. Text/BBM/WhatsApp/iMessage) play in your life?**

*Role of instant messaging and how it is used:*

- Instant messaging media play an important role in young people's lives and are used constantly for day to day communications.
- The entire group use all of the different messaging services i.e. text, BBM and WhatsApp. They use each one depending on who they are messaging, the length or complexity of content they wish to communicate and the urgency of the matter. They also decide which service to use depending on which phone or service the person they are messaging uses e.g. they can only BBM someone who has a blackberry so if the person they want to message only has an iPhone then they will use WhatsApp or text.
- They also chose what is cheapest, and WhatsApp and BBM are good options in this context. However, they said that if they have free texts on their phones then they are less concerned about using BBM or WhatsApp to save money. When they send a text to another iPhone if they are connected to wifi than it becomes an iMessage which is a free service.
- If they want to send a short message the YRAs will use a text. If they want to have a longer conversation they will use a form of instant messenger as the conversation is instant and therefore flows better. The group will send Facebook and Twitter messages if the matter is not urgent.
- If they want to send pictures some will use Snapchat<sup>18</sup> this app allows the user to send pictures instantly to another phone - the unique feature of the app is that the picture lasts for only ten seconds and then it deletes itself from the phone. The YRAs felt that this is better than sending a picture over text or instant message as it uses less internet data, does not require internet connection and the picture does not last so it is seen as more "trustworthy" than other instant messengers.
- The group really like seeing the "two ticks" feature on WhatsApp and the "R" feature on BBM which lets them know that the person has read their message. They also like a service more if it is simple to use.
- They like free apps more than ones they have to pay for but they did state that they may pay a one-off fee to buy it if it was good.
- Only one group member uses FaceTime. Most use Skype instead. The additional features in Skype such as being able to instant message as well as type and have group chats are considered to be superior to FaceTime. FaceTime does not naturally occur to them.
- The younger group members change their status on instant messengers a few times a day. The older group members post statuses as well but change them less than the younger group members. They said they tend to do this only when they are with their friends and "messaging about".

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<sup>18</sup> [www.snapchat.com/](http://www.snapchat.com/)

- Everyone in the group said that they trust the various messaging services but that they have never really thought about why. They have used them for so long it has become “normal”.

**Explore the statement:** “Young people prefer texting to calling”

**YRA feedback:** All agree that this statement is true. However they also think that making a phone call is more personal than simply sending a text.

**Explore the statement:** “Girls send 30 texts a day – 35% more than boys”

**YRA Feedback:** They all felt that this statement is true and “makes a lot of sense” because they think that when boys send texts they are not very substantial e.g. boys will reply with “OK” whereas girls will type very long texts.

### **3. What role does the telephone play in your life?**

*Role of telephone:*

- Whilst texting and instant messaging is a key primary form of communication, young people also regularly use the phone, especially if they need to get a response from someone quickly on something, if they want to discuss something which would be easier to do by phone than text, or if they want to have a chat.

*Landlines and mobiles:*

- The group said that most people do not have landlines today and that mobiles are much more popular. They all use their mobiles to make calls, but stated that they would use a landline:
  - To make a call where they do not want their mobile numbers to show up.
  - To make calls to 0845 numbers as these cost a lot more when using a mobile.
  - To make long phone calls where they do not want to use up their minutes or if they have run out of their monthly minutes.

### **4. What role does email play in your life?**

*Which email accounts young people use:*

- Most of the group has between two and five email accounts. They have one main account which varied from Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo and then they had extras which they either set up a while ago and don't really use anymore or they have email accounts that they had to set up to use a service e.g. set up a YouTube account to subscribe to channels. Some of them have school email accounts too.

*Trust in email:*

- Most YRAs trust their email account providers but have not really thought about why. However, one group member said he does not trust it because it can get hacked easily.

**5. What role does social media play in your life?**

*Overall role and views:*

- The group said social media plays an important role in their lives. They believe that social media is essential in today's society to communicate with other people. However, its value for young people seems to be specifically about connecting with others socially rather than for immediate day to day communications for which young people prefer mechanisms such as instant messaging which is more immediate and private.
- However, the group said that there were mixed feelings as to the degree to which social media makes users feel less isolated. Although social media does provide a platform to engage with others, they said that the nature of online communication is somewhat impersonal and could contribute to a sense of isolation.
- The group spends between 15-30 minutes a day using their social media accounts.
- On certain phones there is a notifications option where it will tell the user whether they have any updates, which they like and which will trigger them accessing their pages.
- Most group members believe that the main social network sites are secure "it is something that you just don't think about". They feel that Facebook has some very good security settings which made them trust the site. However, one said that they are wary and do not trust Facebook or Twitter. Everyone also tends to like to keep their social media accounts separate from each other e.g. they do not connect their Twitter to their Instagram.

*Twitter:*

- Twitter is regarded as the social media of the moment and "cooler" than Facebook. More of the group use Twitter rather than Facebook, partly because their friends are more active on Twitter. There is a sense of a domino effect in the fact that young people will follow in their peers' footsteps and join the social networks they join. They described how, for example, Bebo and MySpace were regarded as "the coolest things ever" when they first came out, but that now no one uses them. The group stated that different social media sites can lose popularity vs. others very quickly.
- Twitter also appeals because they feel it is more exclusive than Facebook. They described Twitter as like a "closed social group" whereas they feel Facebook is for anyone to join.
- The group use Twitter with friends, strangers and also celebrities who have similar interests to them. They described having "made friends" with strangers on Twitter through common interests and following the same celebrities.
- They very much like the idea of having followers and feel that this is fun. They referred to Twitter as "like civilised stalking". They also very much like having their tweets re-tweeted by others.

*Facebook:*

- They regard Facebook as relatively public, and feel more likely to be judged by others by the content of their Facebook pages than is the case with Twitter; older group members are especially aware and wary of this. They said that Facebook can make the user feel self-conscious as there is a pressure to upload “*perfect*” profile pictures. They said they feel pressure to post pictures and “make it look like your life is very exciting”. Similarly, they said “*not having re-tweets is less embarrassing than not having Facebook likes*”. They felt it was more socially acceptable to post lots of tweets daily rather than posting lots of Facebook updates daily. The group would post daily tweets on Twitter whereas they would only share “*things like omg look how cool I am*” to show off to Facebook friends.

*Pinterest and Google plus:*

- Most of the group had not heard of Pinterest<sup>19</sup> or Google plus before; those that had, said they did not really understand the point of it.

*LinkedIn:*

- Most of the group had never heard of LinkedIn but the older members of the group had used the site for specific things such as looking for organisations to do work experience. One of the group members actually set up a work experience this way and regards it as a professional network. The group members who use the site said they would not use it every day and that it is more for ad hoc use to achieve a specific purpose. They said that they might use the site more when they are older and it becomes more necessary for their careers.

*Skype:*

- All use Skype because it is free for both UK and abroad. Everyone in the group really likes using Skype. They said that when Skype was released it was used by professionals for business purposes but then more and more people started to use it and now they all use it.

*Vine:*

- There is a new social network called Vine<sup>20</sup> where users post videos which they said are very funny. Some of the group spend time browsing the videos when they are bored.

*Podcasts:*

- Some of the group did not know what a podcast was. Those who did said that they had rarely looked at a podcast, but that on extremely rare occasions they might download a podcast if the subject matter was very important to them. It was not clear if this was because they do not come across them often, or if they do not like them.

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<sup>19</sup> [www.pinterest.com/](http://www.pinterest.com/)

<sup>20</sup> [www.vine.co/](http://www.vine.co/)

**Explore the statement:** *"The average Facebook user spends 13 minutes a day using the site".*

**YRA Feedback:** The group was surprised at this and felt that they usually spent more than that: *"I can check it a few times a day or spend up to 2 hours at the weekend – usually to look at the newsfeed and the photos".*

## 6. What role does the internet play in your life?

*Overall role and views:*

- The group do not *"really browse the internet"*. They have certain favourite websites that they always go on. They usually type what they want into Google *"Google is our best friend"*.
- The majority of the group use BBC iPlayer<sup>21</sup>, LoveFilm<sup>22</sup> and Netflix<sup>23</sup> to watch content online. However, they like using the internet for television and, for example, will use the internet when watching programmes with other people, and also switch to using the television if the internet is slow.
- Most of the older group members use the internet to get news updates and information. They mostly use Wikipedia, BBC and Digital Spy<sup>24</sup> to do this.
- Most of them are wary of clicking on links on Facebook or Twitter – they only trust certain websites e.g. ones that end in co.uk, .com, .org etc.
- All of the group members' email accounts are connected to their phones so there is never a need to go onto their email accounts via an online link.
- The group listed the following as their favourite websites to go on outside of school:
  - Fanpop<sup>25</sup>
  - Tumblr<sup>26</sup>
  - Information websites like Wikipedia<sup>27</sup>
  - YouTube<sup>28</sup>
  - Train spotting websites
  - Google images
  - Facebook<sup>29</sup>
  - Twitter<sup>30</sup>

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21 [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer)

22 [www.lovefilm.com/](http://www.lovefilm.com/)

23 [www.signup.netflix.com](http://www.signup.netflix.com)

24 [www.digitalspy.co.uk](http://www.digitalspy.co.uk)

25 [www.fanpop.com](http://www.fanpop.com)

26 [www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)

27 [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)

28 [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com)

29 [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

30 [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

- Flickr<sup>31</sup>
- Gmail<sup>32</sup>
- Omegle<sup>33</sup> and Chat roulette<sup>34</sup>
- Skype<sup>35</sup>
- Ebay<sup>36</sup>
- Indeed<sup>37</sup> and Gumtree<sup>38</sup> to search for jobs
- Amazon<sup>39</sup>

*Accessing the internet:*

- The YRAs mainly use laptops and phones to access the internet, rather than PCs. The older group members use their mobile phones to access the internet as well as their laptops. The younger group members stated that they do not have any reason to access the internet from their phones as they can wait and use a laptop at home.
- Most of the group have saved their favourite websites in the favourite bar of their browser and access them from there.
- The group view websites from their laptops as many websites are not easy to access or read on a phone or when there a bad/slow internet connection.
- When they use their phones they are more likely to check social media and instant message than to look at websites.
- The older group members use apps to organise and enhance their day. For example, they check the news, they search Google, use Google maps, they plug their phones into their speakers and connect to YouTube to play music, they check bus times and they download music through their phones.

*Trust in the internet:*

- Most of the group felt that they cannot fully trust the internet *“you can make it private but the things you post are still going to be there, your information is always being recorded”*.
- The group is wary of the things they posted on Facebook and no one would ever post very private details.
- The group is aware that if they apply for a job in the future the employer may search their name on the internet and anything like *“pictures of you throwing up”* could result in you not getting a job or losing one. The group said that boring status updates were annoying *“I don’t want to know you have had a bacon butty”*.

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31 [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)

32 [mail.google.com](http://mail.google.com)

33 [www.omegle.com](http://www.omegle.com)

34 [www.chatroulette.com](http://www.chatroulette.com)

35 [www.Skype.com](http://www.Skype.com)

36 [www.ebay.co.uk/](http://www.ebay.co.uk/)

37 [www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk)

38 [www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com)

39 [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

- Twitter can be made private which is regarded as good. However, the YRAs are aware that whether the user makes their account private or not someone still has access to the information. One of the group member's said that *"ignorance is bliss"* when it comes to knowing the ins and outs of security of social media.
- One YRA member was concerned that Facebook was no longer trustworthy due to account hacking stories.
- The group is wary about participating in sites which require your personal details.

**Explore the statement:** *"Young people would rather live without TV than the internet."*

**YRA Feedback:** No one wanted to choose one over the other. They feel that they cannot live without either. Some of the group thought that TV is not interactive whereas the internet is which is useful, and you can post, like, click on things etc. which they preferred to do. However, on the other hand, the TV doesn't require buffering whereas sometimes the internet is very slow so when this happens they prefer the TV.

**Explore the statement:** *"Most young people prefer websites where they have the opportunity to provide advice as well as receive it."*

**YRA Feedback:** No one agreed with this statement. They were not going on the internet to give advice. They did however like the student room website – which is a website where you can go for advice and to share advice. The younger group members do not post comments online but the older group members do.

**Explore the statement:** *"Playing games online is as popular as downloading music and videos."*

**YRA Feedback:** All agreed with this statement. Most of the group play one-player games online and do not interact with other players.

**Explore the statement:** *"50% of young people have recorded and uploaded a short video to a website"*.

**YRA Feedback:** The group did not agree with this statement. None of the group post videos online themselves. However, the group stated that they like it when other people post videos with happy or positive content.











## Appendix A:

Summary of responses to the pre-task set for activity F.

Weekday:

1. Please tick which box best represents how much time you have spent today on each of the following:

	No time	Less than 15 minutes	Between 16 and 30 minutes	Between 31 and 60 minutes	Between 1 to 2 hours	Over 2 hours
		3	2	2	1	
	8					
	7	1				
	8					
	2		3	1	2	

	1		2	3		2
	8					
	6	1	1			


2. Have you used the internet for any of the following today? Please tick all that apply and say how much time you have spent






	No	Less than 15 minutes	Between 16 and 30 minutes	Between 31 and 60 minutes	Between 1 to 2 hours	Over 2 hours
<b>Blogging</b> e.g. wordpress or goggle blogger	7	1				
<b>Social News websites</b> e.g. reddit or dig	8					
<b>Social gaming websites</b> e.g. Friendster or xBox Live	7		1			

**3. Have you visited any other websites today which have not already been listed above? If so please tell us the name of the website and the amount of time you spent on the website.**

Name of website	Time spent on the website	Name of website	Time spent on the website
BBC	10 mins	Memrise	Over 60 mins
Guardian	10 mins	Dezeen	15 mins
MyMaths	30 mins	Digital Spy	25 mins
Tumblr	60 mins	Wikipedia	15 mins
Pinterest	30 mins	Yahoo mail	








**4. Communicating with people: How much time have you spent today using the different communication methods and who did you contact with each one?**

	Time spent						Who did you communicate with? Please tick all that apply				
	No time	5 minutes or less	6 to 15 mins.	16 to 30 mins.	31 to 60 mins.	Over 1 hour	friends	brother or sister	parents	other relation	someone else – please say who
 <p>Texting</p>	1		5	1		1	5	1	5	1	

	3		2	1	1	1	5	2	1		
	8										
 Talking on the phone	1	1	1	4		1	4	2	6	1	
 Emailing	5		1	1	1						Other org School Teachers
	3		4		1		2			1	Teachers

Weekend:

1. Please tick which box best represents how much time you have spent today on each of the following:

	No time	Less than 15 minutes	Between 16 and 30 minutes	Between 31 and 60 minutes	Between 1 to 2 hours	Over 2 hours
		1	2		1	
	7					
	7					
	7					
	2		2	3		
	1	1		3	1	1
	6					

	6			1		
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**2. Have you used the internet for any of the following today? Please tick all that apply and say how much time you have spent**



	No	Less than 15 minutes	Between 16 and 30 minutes	Between 31 and 60 minutes	Between 1 to 2 hours	Over 2 hours
<b>Blogging</b> e.g. wordpress or goggle blogger	6	1				
<b>Social News websites</b> e.g. reddit or dig	7					
<b>Social gaming websites</b> e.g. Friendster or xBox Live	6				1	

**3. Have you visited any other websites today which have not already been listed above? If so please tell us the name of the website and the amount of time you spent on the website.**

Name of website	Time spent on the website
Gmail	

4. Communicating with people: How much time have you spent today using the different communication methods and who did you contact with each one?

	Time spent						Who did you communicate with?				
	No time	5 minutes or less	6 to 15 mins.	16 to 30 mins.	31 to 60 mins.	Over 1 hour	friends	brother or sister	parents	other relation	someone else – please say who
 Texting	1	1	2			2	3		2	1	
 WhatsApp	4		1			1	2	1			
 BBM	6										
 Talking on the phone	3		2			1	1		3		

 Emailing	3	1	1	1					1		Job application
	3		1		1		1				Teacher

**For the last week:**

**1. In the last week how often have you sent post and to whom? Please tick all the apply**

Total number of letters, postcards, packages sent	Who you sent the post to					
	Friends	Relations	Clubs or organisations you are involved with	Bank	Not sure	Other – please say who
6	1	1	1	2		



**2. In the last week how often have you received post and from whom? Please tick all the apply**

Total number of letters, postcards, packages received	Who you sent the post to					
	Friends	Relations	Clubs or organisations you are involved with	Bank	Not sure	Other – please say who
21	1	1	1	2		College

## Appendix B

Table of websites cited in the report

Facebook	<a href="http://www.Facebook.com">www.Facebook.com</a>	Social networking site for YP
Snapchat	<a href="http://www.snapchat.com">www.snapchat.com</a>	Photo sharing app
BBM	<a href="http://uk.blackberry.com/BBM.html">http://uk.blackberry.com/BBM.html</a>	Instant messenger service for blackberry mobile phone users
NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk/">http://www.nspcc.org.uk/</a>	Aim to end cruelty to children in the UK
Wimps	<a href="http://wimps.tv/stories/lets-talk-volunteering">wimps.tv/stories/lets-talk-volunteering</a>	Project run by young people to make politics more relevant to young people
Young Hackney	<a href="http://www.younghackney.org/">www.younghackney.org/</a>	Website created exclusively for young people, by young people in Hackney
Talk to FRANK	<a href="http://www.talktofrank.com/">www.talktofrank.com/</a>	Drugs advice
Teenage Health Freak	<a href="http://www.teenagehealthfreak.org/">www.teenagehealthfreak.org/</a>	Provides health information to teenagers in a contemporary, cringe-free, entertaining and informative way
UK Youth Parliament	<a href="http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/">www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/</a>	Run by young people, provides opportunities for 11-18 year-olds to use their voice in creative ways to bring about social change

Twitter	<a href="https://twitter.com">https://twitter.com</a>	Information network
Pinterest	<a href="https://pinterest.com">https://pinterest.com</a>	A tool for collecting and sharing images
Google plus	<a href="https://plus.google.com">https://plus.google.com</a>	Sharing and connecting network
LinkedIn	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/">www.linkedin.com/</a>	A social network for professionals
Skype	<a href="http://www.Skype.com/en/">www.Skype.com/en/</a>	Free internet calls through video and voice chat
Vine	<a href="https://vine.co">https://vine.co</a>	Social networking site where users post funny videos
Google	<a href="http://www.google.co.uk">www.google.co.uk</a>	Search engine
BBC iPlayer	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/">www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/</a>	Watch BBC TV programmes via the internet
LoveFilm	<a href="http://www.lovefilm.com/">www.lovefilm.com/</a>	Film subscription service
Netflix	<a href="https://signup.netflix.com">https://signup.netflix.com</a>	Film and TV subscription service
Wikipedia	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page">en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page</a>	Free encyclopedia which users can update
BBC	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk">www.bbc.co.uk</a>	BBC home page
Digital Spy	<a href="http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/">www.digitalspy.co.uk/</a>	Site for news and conversation about entertainment, technology and the media.
Fanpop	<a href="http://www.fanpop.com/">www.fanpop.com/</a>	A network of fan clubs for fans of television, movies, music etc..

Tumblr	<a href="http://www.tumblr.com/">www.tumblr.com/</a>	Write and share blogs
YouTube	<a href="http://www.YouTube.com/">www.YouTube.com/</a>	Share videos
Google images	<a href="https://www.google.co.uk/imghp?hl=en&amp;tab=wi">https://www.google.co.uk/imghp?hl=en&amp;tab=wi</a>	A library of images
Flickr	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/">www.flickr.com/</a>	Share photos
Gmail	<a href="mailto:mail.google.com">mail.google.com</a>	Webmail provider
Omegle	<a href="http://www.omegle.com/">www.omegle.com/</a>	Meet people with common interests
Chat roulette	<a href="http://www.chatroulette.com/">www.chatroulette.com/</a>	Interact with new people over text-chat and webcam
Ebay	<a href="http://www.ebay.co.uk/">www.ebay.co.uk/</a>	Shopping site
Indeed	<a href="http://www.indeed.co.uk/">www.indeed.co.uk/</a>	Job search site
Amazon	<a href="http://www.amazon.co.uk/">www.amazon.co.uk/</a>	Shopping site
Gumtree	<a href="http://www.gumtree.com/">www.gumtree.com/</a>	Classified adds
Google maps	<a href="https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&amp;tab=il">https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&amp;tab=il</a>	Access maps of the world