



## Our final report

### The project

The Get ready project involved children and young people in England in the reporting process for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It also helped them to campaign on children's rights issues that matter to them. The project began in April 2007 and ended in March 2010. Children and young people were involved in decision-making at every stage of the project.

### Who took part?

**4,103 children and young people in England** took part in the Get ready project, in lots of different ways. These included managing the project, carrying out our research, reporting to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, taking part in children's rights training and outreach, taking part in research interviews and surveys, and taking part in conferences and consultations about children's human rights.

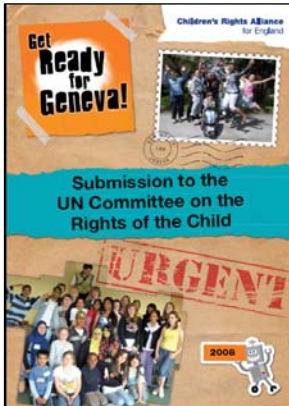


Over 3 years, **78 children and young people helped to lead the project** as steering group members, website and communications team members, children's rights investigators, campaigners and paid young advisers. These children live all over England, and are from many different backgrounds and ethnicities.

Lots of other children and young people have also been involved in the project:

- **234** children and young people have joined our children's rights champions network
- **173** children and young people have taken part in Informed and Influential
- **1,410** children and young people have taken part in an outreach session
- **2,201** children and young people have taken part in children's rights research (in our investigation and through our campaigns)
- Our Get ready website has **564 members**, and gets around **1,250 visitors** each month
- We have **785** Facebook fans.

## What did we achieve at the UN?



**1,908** children and young people in England shared their views with us in our nationwide children's rights investigation in 2007. We analysed and wrote up this research, and in 2008 submitted a report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child with all our findings. This was called: *Get ready for Geneva: Submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*. It included 14 recommendations that we wanted the UN to ask the Government to take action on.

12 children and young people presented our evidence to the UN Committee in Geneva, and 2 children went to Geneva in September to watch the Government being questioned about its children's rights record. Children and young people also met with the UN rapporteur, Professor Lucy Smith from Norway, to tell her about the lives of children and young people in England.



**All** of the recommendations the Get ready project made were included in the UN Committee's concluding observations (its final recommendations to the UK Government). We wrote a children's version of the concluding observations for all the Get ready campaigners.



In December 2007, 2 young people from Get ready were invited by the Government to be part of the UK delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, to talk about issues for children at a world summit.

As a result of the Get ready project, CRAE has been working with the UN Committee and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child to write guidelines to make sure that children and young people can more easily get involved in reporting on children's rights to the UN.

Dr. Kamel Filali, the Vice-Chair of the UN Committee of the Rights of the Child, has called the Get ready project 'a model' for other countries. He said the project was 'really positive because we were really experiencing Article 12 in the making [with] children talking about their problems and...also contributing...to solutions.'

Children and young people from the Get ready project have also drafted a statement to support the international campaign for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Optional Protocol for the CRC. This will allow children to make complaints directly to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child if their rights are ignored. Their statement was supported by 39 children and child-led organisations from 10 countries.

## What did we achieve in England?

We met with the Children's Minister Beverley Hughes MP in June 2008 to share our children's rights concerns with the Government before we travelled to Geneva.



We published a fuller report on the findings of our children's rights investigation in November 2008: *What do they know: Investigating the human rights concerns of children and young people in England.* We sent the report to Government Ministers, and have used it to help us campaign for change for children's rights.

The Government agreed to run two conferences – one in 2008 and one in 2009 – so that we could share our findings about children's rights in England with children and young people, and talk to Government Ministers and officials about what they need to do to better protect children's rights.



We contributed to the Government's action plan for England on the UN Committee's concluding observations, which was published in November 2009.

We ran an event for the Ministry of Justice to help them consult with children and young people about how children's human rights should be included in a British Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. 2 Get ready campaigners then met with the Human Rights Minister Michael Wills MP to discuss children's human rights.

We ran 3 really successful campaigns – Education: Every Child’s Right, Report Right, and Sharing Secrets Safely – and published a major report on our findings called *Get ready for action*. This included **15 recommendations for Government action** to improve children’s rights.



The Education: Every Child’s Right campaign has led to lots of organisations wanting to take forward the issues we have raised, and work with children and young people to take action.

The Report Right campaign has raised the issue of “naming and shaming” and respect for children in the media with important organisations including 11 MILLION and the Press Complaints Commission.



The Sharing Secrets Safely campaign has shown how much demand there is for good counselling support among children and young people. Mental health organisations including YoungMinds and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy want to do more about this as a result of our campaign.

9 charities and individuals endorsed (supported) the *Get ready for action* report. We then held a high profile event in Parliament to launch the report.



18 Parliamentarians attended along with the Children’s Minister, the Children’s Commissioner for England, the Children’s Rights Director and lots of children’s charities. Poet Benjamin Zephaniah welcomed our report. He said *‘it is a very important document and I hope your recommendations are given the attention they deserve’*.

The Children’s Commissioner for England, Sir Al, said that he has been *‘seriously impressed’* with the Get ready project and that the efforts of our campaigners have *‘contributed towards the greater recognition of children’s rights in Government policy and throughout society’*.

We’ve also been really successful at spreading the word about the Get ready project in the media, with articles in major newspapers like *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Independent*, in children’s newspaper *First News*, in many local newspapers, in magazines run by charities, and in *Children & Young People Now*.

## What did we achieve in local communities?

We have run children's rights training in local areas with **1,410** children and young people in England, and another **173** have taken part in our Informed and Influential training. These courses help children and young people to learn about their rights, and show them how they can campaign for change and influence decision-makers.



**234** children and young people joined our children's rights champions network. Their job was to tell people about the CRC and encourage local decision-makers to take action on children's rights.

As a result of their campaigning, we achieved **62 children's rights pledges** from decision-makers (including important national figures) saying what they plan to do to improve children's human rights in England.

Our children's rights champions have taken on lots of different challenges and activities over the last three years. Some of these include:

- Running children's rights training sessions in schools and youth clubs with children and young people, with adults (including teachers and youth workers), and in local communities
- Meeting with their local MPs, and getting them to take action on children's rights
- Sending press releases to their local newspapers
- Talking to national decision-makers about children's rights, including the Secretary of State Ed Balls, and the new Children's Commissioner Dr. Maggie Atkinson
- Telling other children and young people about children's rights and the Get ready project
- Arranging events to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CRC.

## What did children and young people say about the project?

*Learning more about our rights has really helped me to stand up for myself and others.*

We sent a survey to all the children and young people that had helped to run the project – steering group members, website and communications team members, children's rights investigators and campaigners – as well as all our local children's rights champions. 34 children and young people filled it in:

- 100% said that they had learned more about children's rights and the CRC reporting process through being involved in the Get ready project
- 88% thought their experiences will help them get a place at college or university, or to get a job

- 85% said they had learned new skills
- 62% said they had achieved change for children in England
- 44% felt they had made a difference in their local area
- 41% thought they had had a big impact on the United Nations.

*[I learned]...improved communication skills with...young people, a greater awareness of politics, awareness of the positive impact the entire sector can make, great work experience...it has led to me deciding what I want to do for the rest of my life...*

*The project was more than how I expected it to be. This is because [it] carried out many events and campaigns which made a huge impact to children's lives in England. No matter how small the event was, it made a big difference as it helped [children] gain new knowledge...*



## What happens now?

CRAE is setting up a young activists network so that we can continue supporting children and young people to campaign for change in children's rights. It is important for us that we have a really wide range of things available for children and young people to take part in, so that no child or young person is prevented from getting involved because of their background or circumstances.

We will set up a children's advisory committee, which will help to plan CRAE's work and decide which children's rights issues we work on. Members of this committee will also help us design children's rights projects, run the young activists network, and get involved in raising money for CRAE.

Children and young people can also join CRAE's Council of Management.

## More information

For a copy of the full grant report, contact Sam Dimmock, head of policy at CRAE, on 020 7278 8222 extension 23, or at [sdimmock@crae.org.uk](mailto:sdimmock@crae.org.uk).