

Get ready for Geneva project update December 2007

Project progress

This month we have been concentrating on the children's rights investigation and speaking to as many children and young people as possible. Two young people from the Get ready for Geneva project went to New York to a meeting at the United Nations and we ran a very successful Informed & Influential training day. Read on to find out more!

Children's rights investigation

Online survey

Only 12 people have filled in our health survey so far, so please visit the website and answer the questions the investigators have put together.

It is really important that lots of young people fill in our survey, so that we can tell the UN exactly what life is like for children in England. Try to get at least one friend, or your brothers or sisters, to fill in the survey too.

www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/your_say/survey

What about my health?

Children and young people have been talking about their article 24 right to the best health and health services. We've asked what you think about healthy food in schools, and who should be responsible for keeping children healthy.

You can take part in the debate at

www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/your_say

Focus groups

The first phase of the children's rights investigation is now drawing to a close as we carry out the last of the focus group interviews. Well done to all the investigators and members of the website and steering group who have led the interviews – you've all done a fantastic job!

So far, we have spoken to over 340 children and young people across England. We have put a sneak preview of some of the most interesting things that have come out of the interviews on the website. To find out more, follow this link:

http://www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/news/article_some_of_the_things_weve_learned_from_the_interviews_weve_conducted_so_far/

Thanks again to everyone who has helped with the investigation! In January we will start looking at the results more closely. Watch this space to find out what children and young people told us about their lives and what they would like to change.

Cory is 10 years old and an investigator for the Get Ready for Geneva project. In early December, Natalie, a member of the steering group, interviewed him about his recent activities...

N (Natalie) What has been your favourite thing you've done as an investigator?

C (Cory) My first investigation meeting was in Cambridge with traveller children aged between 10 and 13. This was quite good, and was my first interview so I learned a lot.

N What have you learned as a result of been involved with CRAE?

C I have learned never to put your hand over your mouth when you are speaking; I have learned how to interview people, learned about children's rights and how young people are treated in different countries.

N Can you tell me about some of your investigation visits you have done?

C I went to Watford to meet a group of black ethnic children aged between 11 and 18; some of the things we asked was if they got bullied, if people were racist against them and if they felt they got the education they needed. I also went to North London to visit another group of traveller children, but the first interview in Cambridge was the best.

N Looks like you've been very busy, have you got any more investigations coming up?

C I have another interview in about two week's time in Newcastle.

N Why should other young people get involved with Get Ready for Geneva?

C So they can help other children around the world and learn lots of things about children's rights.

Spotlight on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

This month the focus is on article 24. Article 24 is all about the right to be healthy and receive the best possible health services.

What does this mean for children and young people in England?

- Children should get advice and support to be fit and healthy
- There should be lots of opportunities for children to do regular exercise and eat healthy food
- If children have a health problem there should be a professional (for example a nurse, doctor) they can speak to and get advice from
- Children often need different health services and care to adults. Health care must be suitable for children and young people. This means that children should not always use adult health services.

Make sure you log on to the Get ready for Geneva website to have your say about your right to be healthy and receive excellent health care.

Next month the focus will be on article 13: 'Every child has the right to freedom of expression, including the right to all kinds of information and ideas (unless there are legal restrictions).'

If you have any thoughts about what this means for children and young people in England for the next monthly update please e-mail cgarnelas@crae.org.uk by January 20th.

Informed & Influential

We ran a very successful Informed and Influential training course on Saturday December 1st. Paul (a children's rights champion) did an excellent job at helping us lead the day. Emily Thornberry MP came to speak to the participants and answered their questions about how to get involved in politics and influence decision makers.



Informed & Influential participants with Emily Thornberry MP

Website

Thanks to all of you who have been writing blogs, sending in comments and using the forums. This month Kathryn, a member of the website and communications team wrote a great PM swap:

***If I were the Prime Minister for a week** I would first improve the picture of children and young people in the media. I think they make all young people look really badly behaved. - Some young people may be, but not all children are criminals/badly behaved/disrespectful. I don't think everything about young people's crimes should be cut out of the T.V./radio/newspaper. ... because it warns what SOME children are like. To help further I would visit a few schools over the UK and see what they think about crime and discrimination.*

I would also get famous people like well-known footballers/dancers/singers ... to go to schools over the UK to tell children how bullying is wrong. This might decrease the amount of bullying in schools, also I would try and get a report about this event in newspapers, on T.V. (e.g. news) and radios. ... Children might hear about this happening and they might help bullying being stopped.

Another thing I would do is personally and hire other children's rights enthusiasts to go round to assemblies in schools to make children be informed that they have rights and be aware of the rights they have.

***If the Prime Minister lived my life for a week** I think he would find out how, not me, but other children are bullied lots and how many children are treated badly by other children at school. I have a caring family, we eat healthily and I'm looked after very well.*

Campaigning pack for children's rights champions

Sam (the programme director) has been busy writing the Get ready for Geneva campaigning pack, with help from steering group members and children's rights champions. She is now looking for people from every team (steering group, web team, investigators and champions) to give her advice on what the designs for the campaigning pack should look like.

To get involved, you will need to commit to looking at the designs for the pack in January, and to sending your views to Sam within a week of seeing the designs. It might also include coming to London for a meeting. **If you are interested, please e-mail sdimmock@crae.org.uk.**

Spreading the word

Alex (a children's rights investigator) and Iqra (a member of the steering group) went to New York for five days as part of the UK Government's delegation (group of representatives) to the UN General Assembly's World Fit for Children +5 event. World Fit for Children +5 (WFFC+5) has been organised by the UN to find out how much progress countries have made towards the goals they set to make the world a better place for children at the UN Special Session for Children in 2002.

Alex and Iqra spoke to children and adults from all over the world about issues including HIV/AIDS, health, education, and keeping children safe. They both made a speech at the UN General Assembly about the challenges facing children in the UK and what more needs to be done to protect their rights. They also made sure that they told all of the participants about Get ready for Geneva and handed out lots of postcards!

Read their speech here:

http://www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/images/uploads/Alex_and_Iqras_speech_to_the_UN_General_Assembly.doc

To find out more about their trip to New York, read Alex and Iqra's blogs:

http://www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/your_say/investigator_blog

http://www.getreadyforgeneva.org.uk/about/steering_group_blog



Alex and Iqra at the United Nations General Assembly

Working with CRAE

Three volunteers from the Get ready for Geneva project, Dominic (a children's rights investigator), Laura (a web team member and children's rights champion) and Imogen (part of the steering group) have become Trustees at CRAE. This means that they will be joining the CRAE Council to decide how the organisation is run and what things we should be working on.

Staying in touch with project staff

CRAE will be closed from 25th December to 1st January, but we'll be back in the office on 2nd January. You can still post comments, blogs and articles on the Get ready for Geneva website while the office is closed – they will go live as usual.

Coming up...

7th January ... our final survey on 'your free time' goes live on the website

21st February ... Informed and Influential – if you're a champion and you still haven't been on this training course, why not sign up?

23rd February ... Meeting for the steering group, web team and investigators to decide how we will present the investigation results to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.