

Get ready for Geneva project update April 2008

Happy Birthday Get ready for Geneva!

We have now completed the first year of Get ready for Geneva. We think you'll agree it's been an amazing year. Thank you to all of you for your hard work, enthusiasm and commitment to the project and children's rights. We are really looking forward to working with you in the future.



Children's rights investigation

Ciara has finished analysing all the evidence from our research on education and friends and family. We're finding out lots of interesting things about children's rights in England – check out this newsletter next month for an update!

Reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The final report from Get ready for Geneva has been sent to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – a massive well done to the drafting committee for all their hard work! They have decided not to publish the report until June, to make sure it is kept confidential between children and young people, and the UN. Until then, here are some of the recommendations we've made:

- *More needs to be done to help make children feel respected in all aspects of their lives. Laws should be introduced to ban unfair age discrimination.*
- *Make sure that the UNCRC is a compulsory part of the curriculum for children of all ages and provide more information about the UNCRC to parents and other adults.*
- *More needs to be done to stop police from discriminating against specific groups of children (especially black and ethnic minority and Traveller children) and assuming that they are guilty of committing crimes.*
- *Make sure that all children who are locked up are treated with respect. They must have access to good health care and decent living conditions.*

- *More Government money should be spent on providing more, and cheaper leisure facilities and youth activities for children. The needs of all children, including disabled children and those with religious beliefs must be taken into account when deciding what activities are available at youth and leisure centres.*

The report will be on the Get ready for Geneva website in June.

On April 17, Sam and Carla went to meet officials from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to talk about the Get ready for Geneva project. They were really interested in the children's rights investigation and the recommendations in the report to the UN Committee. We hope to set up a meeting between young people from the project and DCSF officials in the next couple of months. We'll keep you posted!

The children and young people's delegation

At the end of April we held a residential for the winners of the 'Get ready for Geneva' competition to prepare them for going to speak to the Committee on June 11 2008. Most of the weekend was spent learning the findings and recommendations in the report. We also did lots of role play activities to practice talking about the findings to the UN Committee and to journalists.

In the delegation we have 5 young people who have been involved in the project and 7 new volunteers from different parts of England. Two members of the delegation will get to speak at the main committee meeting (called the pre-sessional) and the whole delegation will get to participate in an informal session with members of the UN Committee and children from Wales and Scotland. The delegation will be reporting back – so watch this space for more information!

Only **42** days to go until the Get ready for Geneva delegation meets the UN!



Spreading the word...

...in Parliament

On **June 17**, CRAE is planning to host an event in Parliament about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the reporting process. We'll be looking for people from the Get ready for Geneva project to take part, and to give a presentation about the findings of our children's rights investigation. Interested? E-mail Sam at sdimmock@crae.org.uk to find out more!

...across England

Krishna will really be busy over the next few months spreading the word about the project and children's rights. She will be travelling to Buckinghamshire, Cumbria, Essex and Suffolk – so make sure you have a look in the next update to see how she got on!

11 Million website launch

We went to the launch of 11 Million's new website:

<http://www.11million.org.uk>



A great job was done of promoting the Get ready for Geneva project!

Sir Al is getting ready for Geneva... are you?

Informed and Influential

We have decided to run training sessions in different regions across England. By doing this we hope to get children and young people involved from parts of the country that haven't even heard of the Geneva project!

We are running the first one in Cornwall this summer, for children and young people living in the South West of England. We will let you know how we get on!

Are you spreading the word?

Get ready for change, our campaign pack, was sent to you a few weeks ago. Have you been taking action to spread the word about children's rights? Have a look at the different ways you can take action – don't forget to let us know what you have been up to!

A presentation on children's rights

Get ready for Geneva volunteers have been invited to give a presentation on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the University of York on **July 1**. Other speakers on the agenda include Rob Williams, the head of 11 Million (the Children's Commissioner's office). If you think you'd be interested in doing this, please call Sam on 020 7278 8222 extension 23, or e-mail her at sdimmock@crae.org.uk by May 11.

Plans for 2008

The steering group and the programme director have been working on plans for the second year of Get ready for Geneva (April 2008 to March 2009). This includes setting dates for all our meetings and training courses. We're putting the final touches to the work plan, and will give you all the dates you won't want to miss in the next update!

Stay in touch

To contact the Get ready for Geneva team e-mail info@getreadyforgeneva.org.uk or call 020 7278 8222. Remember, you can also keep each other updated on what you have been doing on the website. Get in touch if you aren't sure how to do this.

Take action...

Tell your MP that hitting a child is just as wrong as hitting an adult!

Enclosed are postcards that you can send to your MP calling for children to have equal protection from assault. At the moment, parents and other adults acting as parents can justify hitting children as "reasonable punishment". The postcards are asking for children to have the same protection as adults under the law – hitting a child should be just as wrong as hitting an adult.

There is a big opportunity to change the law when Parliament looks at the Children & Young Persons Bill over the next few months. Please send one of the postcards to your MP and pass on the other postcards to friends or family. If you're not sure who your MP is, go to www.upmystreet.com/commons//.

If you would like to join the Children Are Unbeatable! Children's Campaign against smacking, please contact Elinor on 07504 738 741 or Elinor@childrenareunbeatable.org.uk. If you would like more postcards, please contact Catherine on cbillingham@crae.org.uk.