



**'Making it Happen for Children and Young People
from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Scotland' 12th October 2004**

BBC Children in Need, BBC Scotland and BEMIS, supported by Youth Counselling Services and Careers Scotland & the Active Life Club.

A summary report

As part of the development work of Children in Need & BBC Scotland we are continually looking for new ways to engage with a range of communities across Scotland. Within that outreach work meetings are held in different locations involving different communities of interest. BEMIS became an important partner with Children in Need in 2004.

As a result of discussions with young people from black & minority ethnic projects it was decided to have a day's conference that would focus on issues that they felt were important to them. The conference was held at the Grosvenor Hotel on the 12th October 2004. Approximately 100 people including 40 young people came from across Scotland, including senior managers from Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary organisations, representatives from statutory/public bodies including the Scottish Executive, Education and Police. It was also attended by a number of BBC Colleagues ie Broadcasting Council for Scotland, Drama, Diversity Unit and News.

The programme involved the following:

- Opening Welcomes and Introductions from Ewan Angus, Head of Television, BBC Scotland, Fraser Falconer, National Coordinator BBC Children in Need Appeal and Rami Ousta, Chief Executive BEMIS.
- Film: 'The Active Life Club'
- The conference then split into two groups with the young people and the adults attending various workshops.
- The afternoon session involved a debate on issues and questions that arose from the mornings workshops, chaired by Vijay Patel, Scottish Executive.

The workshops for young people focussed on three key areas and raised the following issues:

- What can schools do to promote community understanding and combat racism?
- How can the police make it safer for me to walk in the streets?
- I don't have any choice about what I can do when leaving school- do I?

Workshops also took place at BBC Scotland and looked at working at the BBC, setting the News agenda and creating a character for television.

The young people who participated in the workshops raised the following issues and action points and hoped that the conference organisers would send them on their behalf to the relevant organisations and public bodies.

<p>EDUCATION Issues Raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of understanding about different religions/cultural backgrounds and diversity generally, • lack of training on diversity/ race issues when teachers do initial teacher training • Role of Head Teachers is crucial (those 	<p>Action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action not just discussion • Need to ensure establishments are geared to handle race issues eg guidance teachers need better training/access to other advocates • Schools should have an advocate (preferably from BME background) to support young
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<p>who are supportive v those who don't take action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents need support and information to help raise issues • Young people want to be listened to when they raise issues and need a safe forum to be able to express their rights • Voluntary orgs & CRE – young people need to have more info on what they do and how they can support communities. • HMI need to do <i>unannounced</i> visits and talk to parents / young people about issues (not just those parents the school engages with). • Need to educate/inform all people about racism at an early stage (nursery/primary) 	<p>people who have problems around racism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need peer group support mechanisms eg black young people's forum • More info for parents – workshops, not just paper/leaflet info • Distribute more info on support organisations eg voluntary/community orgs/CRE • HMI need to be more effective and carry out "real" inspections
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<p>POLICE Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people feel intimidated by youths who binge drink in the streets • Young people feel that they can't trust the police and don't like their attitudes towards them • Problems with racist attacks in school and in the community • Intimidation with knives- young people don't feel able to speak out against bullies, either in school or in court • No support for young people who may have to appear in court as a witness- a very intimidating situation • Not enough links/communication with communities/schools and police • Police are not perceived to be open and transparent • There is no feedback to the communities about crime 	<p>Action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More police to patrol the streets and control binge drinking and general anti-social behaviour • Anti-racism training for police officers would help them to understand and be trusted by the young people and the communities • Working with the community and all local schools, a long term strategy needs to be developed to combat the problems of binge drinking and anti social behaviour (more youth clubs etc) • The police need to respond faster to calls • More community policemen need to work directly with communities to break down barriers and create trust and good working relationships • More CCTV camera to reduce crime • More grassroots work is needed with schools to gain the trust of the young people, give them confidence in the police while working to combat racism in school
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<p>CAREERS Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough information available about leaving /after leaving school (inc career options, open days training, prospectuses, further education) • Not all schools have career advisors • Careers advisors don't give enough time to pupils which makes it hard to trust and talk openly • Pupils are not given any advice till S4/S5-too late • Careers Advisors don't volunteer advice, only what is asked about. Problematic if pupils are not aware of options! • No practical advice re CV's, applications forms etc • Careers advisors sometimes make assumptions, based on culture, about which subjects young people should pick. • Problems with parents and language barriers. 	<p>Action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career advisors need to spend <i>more time</i> with all young people in every school • Career guidance/advice is needed at a younger age (S1/S2) • Guidance teachers should be trained as career Advisors, so they are fully aware of available training • More information on training provision passed on to young people • Full Time Career Advisors need to work in every school and spend time with young people to create trust and good relationships • Establish a good, ongoing, communication channel with students and parents to overcome language barriers • Former pupils/role models support younger pupils and help give insight into different jobs.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers interviews should be for everyone • Careers leaflets and booklets too boring 	
<p>BBC SCOTLAND Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough black & ethnic minority faces on TV every day. • BBC is seen as inaccessible to minority ethnic communities – “not for us”. • BBC doesn’t reflect the cultures of all the ethnic groups in the UK 	<p>Action Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put more minority ethnic faces on screen to raise visibility – and not just when there are problems. • More positive portrayal. • Write characters that BME communities can identify with – could also highlight how various issues can be dealt with. • Encourage approaches from all communities in the UK in recruitment. Get the information out there that the BBC welcomes all. • Show more of the diverse range of cultural activities going on in Scotland and UK in arts & news programming etc