

Youth Voices: Improving Access to Support Services

Introduction

[The Trust for Developing Communities](#) (TDC) is facilitating a research study into improving ethnically diverse young people's access to support services in Brighton & Hove. This document provides information about the study and what it means for the young people who participate in it.

What is the research study about?

TDC have recruited a diverse group of young people to design and deliver this research study as peer researchers. The research is funded by Brighton and Hove City Council and the Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership.

The focus of this study is to gather valuable insights into barriers to access and engagement that ethnically diverse young people aged 11 to 19 may face when seeking help from youth support services in Brighton & Hove. There will also be an emphasis on identifying solutions that can increase awareness, reduce barriers, and increase accessibility by shaping youth support services so they always feel inclusive, and a place ethnically diverse young people would want to go, should they ever need to.

How will the study work?

Being thoughtful about psychological challenges or experiences of trauma for some young people, the research has been designed with sensitivity and psychological safety in mind. Therefore, this study focusses on gathering young peoples' views and suggestions without asking about or delving into personal stories or experiences. This study is being delivered through two research methods; however, most young people will only participate in the first one.

The first research method is an anonymous online questionnaire for ethnically diverse young people aged 13-19 living, studying, or working in Brighton and Hove. This short survey takes 5-10 minutes to complete; and asks questions around awareness of youth support services, what might stop or get in the way of ethnically diverse young people using youth support services and gathers their suggestions for making these services more welcoming and inclusive. As an expression of our gratitude for their valuable insights, participants have the option to enter a prize draw with a chance to win one of four £25 vouchers. The survey is due to close at 9am on Monday 25th of March.

The second research method involves a small number of focus groups, each will likely have 2-4 young people. These groups will creatively explore the challenges and barriers that ethnically diverse youths might face in accessing support services, and collaborative activities aimed at identifying strategies to enhance service awareness, access, and inclusivity. The focus groups been designed to encourage open and constructive dialogues without the need to share personal experiences. Our goal is to create a forward-thinking, solution-oriented space where all participants feel comfortable and empowered to

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contribute their ideas and perspectives. Should a safeguarding matter arise, it will be responded to by TDC staff who will follow safeguarding policies and procedures. The focus groups will be held in locations and times convenient to the young people participating, including schools, and take 60-90 minutes including breaks. Each young person will receive a £20 voucher to thank them for their participation.

Supported by our staff team, the focus groups will be co-facilitated by our peer researchers, who have been trained and have DBS checks – to ensure a safe and supportive environment. We will ask professionals in youth and educational sectors to help promote the focus groups and identify young people who are interested in taking part. We will be asking both young people and their parents / caregivers to consent to their involvement.

As you consider this opportunity for your child, please think about their suitability to get involved, recognising the importance of their comfort and safety in sharing their opinions and ideas. It's also important you feel they can make an informed decision to participate.

NB. We acknowledge an online survey cannot be accessible to every young person and may not meet every young person's needs. If a young participant finds reading or completing the survey challenging, we warmly encourage parents and caregivers to assist them. Your support is invaluable in ensuring their voices are heard and will contribute significantly to the study's success. We appreciate your understanding and assistance.

What are the benefits for young people participating?

Participating young people will be helping influence how youth support services are delivered for ethnically diverse young people in the city in future. Additionally, the peer researchers felt strongly that young people participating are thanked for their contributions and have arranged a prize draw for those that complete the survey and vouchers for each of the focus group participants.

Who is on the team?

First and foremost is the team of peer researchers, who are all interested in social action and making positive change through research. They have designed this research project from the ground up.

Supporting them is the staff at TDC, Youth Workers and facilitators Alice Banfield, Roman Waters and Esme Young. Managing the project is Mark Cull, who is a co-founder director of [Different Noise Platform B](#) are supporting the peer researchers to develop a creative piece of media that will be influenced by the research, and a medium to share the findings.

Consulting on the project are Darren Abrahams and Martin Burrows. Darren is co-founder of [Human Hive](#) and a professional trauma therapist, supporting the peer researcher team to make sure they engage with young people in a way that is trauma informed. Martin is the founder of [Inclusive Insight](#) and works with third sector organisations developing research that tackles inequality. He has supported the peer researchers in making sure the project is ethical and effective.

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What information will be collected?

Young people will be given written information about the research. Should they want to join a focus group, we will seek theirs and your permission via a consent form.

The following information will be collected from young people completing the online survey:

1. Anonymous demographic information: age, ethnicity, whether they live, study or work in Brighton & Hove, gender, sexuality.
2. Their anonymous survey question responses, which includes a tick box question around whether they have accessed youth support services in the city, have needed to access services but haven't done so, or whether they have not needed to use youth support services.
3. Name and contact details will only be collected for the purpose of entering the competition – participants will be redirected to a separate page to leave these details, to ensure survey responses are anonymous.

The following information will be collected from young people to participate in a focus group:

1. Demographic information before the focus group session. This includes age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, whether they live, study or work in Brighton & Hove.
2. Their views, ideas and solutions given during focus group questions and activities, including their suggestions for ensuring inclusive, accessible, and fair services.
3. Names and contact details for participants will be collected for these purposes only:
 - a. To organise focus groups.
 - b. To arrange thank you vouchers.
 - c. In the event of a safeguarding concern.

Who will have access to young people's personal information?

TDC staff involved in this research project will have access to Personally Identifiable Information for the purposes of safeguarding, organising focus groups, and ensuring participants receive their vouchers. The peer researchers will not have access to participants' personally identifiable information. They will have access to anonymous demographic data, survey responses and focus group responses.

Is all the personal information about young people confidential?

All personal information collected as part of the study will be kept confidential. The exception to this being a safeguarding concern.

Where will information be stored and for how long?

Survey data will be stored on TDC's Typeform account and focus group data will be stored on TDC's internal cloud storage. TDC will store information securely following General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and will follow the principles outlined in GDPR to ensure the responsible and lawful handling of personal data.

Personal information provided to enter the online survey competition will be stored until the prize draw has taken place which will be no later than 19 April 2024 and will then be deleted. If a young person would like TDC to delete their contact details before this date, e.g., because they no longer wish to be

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entered for the prize draw, they can contact, romanwaters@trustdevcom.org.uk and TDC will delete their personal information.

Consent forms and personal information for the focus groups will be stored for no longer than 12 months after completion of the research project and no later than 30 April 2025.

The research data from the online survey question responses and the focus groups will be stored for no longer than 12 months after completion of the research project and no later than 30 April 2025.

What if a young person or their parent/carer no longer want their responses to the focus group questions & creative activities to be used?

Participation in the research study is voluntary and young people have the right to opt-out/withdraw whilst participating in the research, without giving a reason. Before project completion the young person can contact, romanwaters@trustdevcom.org.uk if they would like their responses removed from the research. After 30 April 2024 we will no longer be able to modify the information as it will be submitted in a research report.

Getting involved with the creative output.

Platform B are supporting young people to develop a creative piece of media as a medium to share the findings. If a young person would like to be involved in this part of the project, they can consent to TDC sharing their contact details with Platform B. Please note, this is separate to the survey and focus group participation - as such no personally identifiable information will otherwise be shared with Platform B.

Further questions and/or complaints

If you have a question or would like to discuss anything about the study, please contact Roman Waters, youth coach at TDC at romanwaters@trustdevcom.org.uk

If you would like to make a complaint, you can contact Adam Muirhead, Director of Youth Work at TDC at adammuirhead@trustdevcom.org.uk

If you have any complaints about the way the research data is treated, you can report them here: www.ico.org.uk/concerns