

CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

EVERY BME CHILD MATTERS

**How Black and Minority Ethnic Community Groups can
Influence Local and Regional Policy Making and
Planning of Services for Children and Young People**

BTEG
BLACK TRAINING & ENTERPRISE GROUP

EMPOWERING BLACK
ORGANISATIONS TO MAKE
A D I F F E R E N C E

FOREWORD

The Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG) is a national organisation working to improve opportunities and outcomes for black and minority ethnic communities. We believe that full and effective involvement by people from black and minority ethnic communities in making policy and delivering public services are essential steps to achieving this.

BTEG has produced this guide to help community education projects working with children and young people to influence how local services for children are developed and delivered. Many BME groups feel unable to get involved in influencing policy; most feel that they are just too busy with the day to day work of running their organisation. But there are also those who may not know how to influence policy making processes, or who feel that they don't know enough about the policies or the processes to contribute to them. This guide aims to give BME groups the confidence and the knowledge to become more directly involved in the major changes which are taking place in policies and processes for children and young people.

Without greater involvement from BME groups, some local partnerships will continue to spend public money on services which do not meet the needs of BME children and young people or which fail to close the gaps between BME communities and the rest of the population. There is also a major role for BME groups to play in holding public authorities to account for how they are meeting their legal duty to eliminate racial discrimination.

BME community education projects must work together locally to influence decision makers and improve educational outcomes for BME children and young people.

We hope this guide will inspire more of you to get directly involved in making this happen.

Jeremy Crook OBE
Director of BTEG

BTEG's CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

BTEG has established a Centre for Educational Success (CES) to provide a national voice for and support to BME organisations and groups which are working to improve educational outcomes for BME children and young people. The CES is seeking to influence policy makers and education practitioners to develop education policy and performance to achieve improved outcomes for BME children.

Government policies and programmes for improving educational attainment concentrate on schools and young people. We believe that community education projects make a significant contribution to the education experience of many young BME people but that all too often this contribution is not recognised by the statutory sector. The CES seeks to provide a voice for local community education projects at the national level so that Government can hear and understand what really makes a difference for young BME people and their parents.

The CES is promoting education achievement for children and young people from BME groups in England by:

- Undertaking research on education issues for BME communities;
- Contributing to policy development;
- Promoting good practice in community education for BME young people;
- Facilitating networking and information exchange between community education providers;
- Supporting local groups to influence policy and strategy in their local areas.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2002 there have been major changes in the way that public services for children and young people are planned and delivered. These changes will directly affect all agencies working with children and young people, including voluntary and community groups. BTEG has produced this guide for voluntary and community groups working with BME children and young people. This paper explains the major changes being made to services for children and young people and looks at how BME groups can respond to these changes.

The welfare of children and young people concerns everyone but there are particular concerns for Britain's BME communities. The age profile of BME communities means that a greater proportion are young; 19% of the white population is under 16 while 30% of the BME population is under 16. So while the total BME population in Britain is just over 8%, around 12% of Britain's under-16s are BME.¹ In maintained schools in England, 17% of secondary school children and 21% of primary school children are from BME backgrounds.

There are many areas in which BME children and young people do less well than the white population including in education, where some BME groups are still well below the national average in achieving qualifications at school. There are also strong concerns about the number of BME children and young people caught up in crime. BME young people are more likely to be victims of crime than white young people. They are also greatly over-represented as offenders; 28% of all detainees in young offender and juvenile institutions are BME.² BME children are also over-represented in the care system, with 17% of looked after children from BME backgrounds.³ There are also issues around health and particularly the mental health of young people in some BME populations.

¹ 2001 Census

² Hansard, written answer from Gerry Sutcliffe, Parliamentary Under Secretary, Home Office, 27 March 2007

³ The needs of foster children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, Practice note 3, Social Care Institute for Excellence

We know that many BME groups are working with their communities to deal with these issues. BTEG's new Centre for Educational Success, launched in 2006, has so far identified over 700 groups in England which are working with BME children and young people to improve their educational achievements. There are thousands more groups providing support, information, advice and other services to BME children, young people and their families. This guide is aimed at all these groups with the intention of helping them to better understand and get actively involved in the major changes taking place in children's services.

What Changes are being made?

In 2002, the Government published *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* which set out a new approach to the well being of children from birth to age 19. This new approach was given a legal basis by passing the Children's Act 2004. Key changes brought about by this new approach include

- bringing together health, education and social services for children and young people within new Children's Trusts
- appointing a Children's Commissioner for England
- replacing the previous local Area Child Protection Committees with new Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- requiring local authorities to appoint a Director of Children's Services, a Lead Member for Children and to publish a Children and Young People's Plan
- introducing a Common Assessment Framework for assessing a child's needs.

Further measures to help achieve the *Every Child Matters* vision include the development of Children's Centres and Extended Schools.

Why are these Changes being made?

The aim of the changes is to prevent future tragedies occurring because of gaps in the care and protection system. The need for

change was prompted by the murder in 2000 of eight year old Victoria Climbié who was starved and tortured to death despite coming into contact with four social services departments, two hospitals, three housing departments, two police child protection teams and a specialist centre run by the NSPCC. The public enquiry into Victoria's case found that a series of administrative, managerial and professional failures had led to her death. The enquiry report recommended major changes to the organisation of services for children aimed at improving their quality and accountability. Many of these changes which are currently being made are in response to these recommendations.

2. KEY CHANGES IN SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Every Child Matters: Change for Children 2000

Every Child Matters: Change for Children sets out the Government's new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. It provides a framework for achieving the five key aims which every child should expect from life. These are

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

All organisations which provide services to children are expected to work together to ensure that these aims are achieved. This includes local authorities, schools, hospitals and the police. Voluntary and community organisations should also be closely involved in planning and delivering services to achieve these outcomes in their local areas. The Every Child Matters framework includes many initiatives and programmes, not all of which are covered in this guide.

To find out more about Every Child Matters go to www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Children's Act 2004

The Children's Act provides the legal basis for some important elements of the approach outlined in Every Child Matters. It provides for the creation of the new Children's Commissioner, the establishment of the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, the publication of the Children and Young People Plan, and appointment of a Director of Children's Services.

The Children's Act also sets out which agencies have a legal duty to co-operate with the local authority in ensuring the well-being of children and young people. These agencies are:

- Police
- Probation Service
- Youth Offending Team
- Strategic Health Authority and Primary Care Trust
- Learning and Skills Council
- Providers of learning and skills such as schools and local colleges

Children's Commissioner

The Children's Act 2004 established a national Children's Commissioner to promote awareness of the views and interests of children in England. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland already have their own Children's Commissioners, although each one has slightly different responsibilities.

The Commissioner advises the Government on the views, needs and interests of children, and is expected to raise the profile of issues that affect children in England by representing the views of groups of children who may not otherwise have a voice.

Professor Al Aynsley-Green was appointed as the first Children's Commissioner for England in spring 2005.

Director of Children's Services

The Children's Act gives a legal obligation to every local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services. The Director of Children's Services will be responsible for delivery of social, health and educational services for children but not for further and higher education.

Traditionally, local authorities have managed social services for people of all ages within a single department or directorate, while all education services have been managed within a separate directorate for education. Merging these services into a single Children's Services directorate under the management of the new Director of Children's Services represents a major re-organisation for local authorities.

To ensure accountability at the political level, a local councillor must be appointed Lead Member for Children. Every local authority must have a Lead Member for Children and a Director of Children's Services by 2008.

Children and Young People Plan

The Children's Act requires every local authority to publish a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which sets out how the authority will provide services for all children and young people in their area. The CYPP has to show how the local authority will work towards achieving the aims of Every Child Matters.

The CYPP is required to cover:

- Improvements which the authority intends to make during the plan period to the outcomes for children and young people
- A local vision for children and young people
- An assessment of needs in relation to outcomes
- Priorities and key actions planned to achieve the outcomes
- A statement of how resources will be deployed to achieve the outcomes
- An explanation of how the plan relates to arrangements for performance management and review of services
- The arrangements for co-operation under the duty to co-operate with other partners
- An explanation of how the CYPP is consistent with the strategic plans of local partners

Local authorities which have been rated "excellent" by the Audit Commission do not have to produce a CYPP.

Consultation and Participation

Local authorities are required to consult locally about their CYPP. This is expected to include consultation with children and young people themselves. They are also required to ensure that the voluntary and community sector has been consulted on the CYPP.

Children's Trusts

Children's Trusts are new partnership arrangements which bring together services for children and young people. The first Children's Trusts began to be established in 2003 when the Government funded 35 local areas to develop pilot Children's Trusts. Every local area is required to have a Children's Trust by 2008.

The 35 pilot areas are:

Barnsley, Bexley, Blackburn and Darwen, Colton, Brighton and Hove, Calderdale, Cambridgeshire, City of York, Croydon, Darlington, Devon, Ealing, East Yorkshire, Essex, Gateshead, Greenwich, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Leicester, Newcastle, North Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Portsmouth, Redbridge, Sandwell, Sheffield, Solihull, South Tyneside, Sutton, Telford and Wrekin, Tower Hamlets, Trafford, West Sussex, Wokingham.

Each local area is expected to set up a Children's Trust which best meets the needs of that area. This means that Children's Trusts differ from place to place and that there is no one model for how they are organised and how they operate. The Children's Trust may not necessarily be called a 'Children's Trust' in some local areas.

Generally, each Children's Trust is governed by a board made up of all relevant partner agencies, including the local authority, health authority, police and others. The board should be linked to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the area, and in some areas the board will actually be part of the LSP arrangements. If Children's Trusts boards are closely linked to LSPs, the board could have responsibility for the children and young people's block of the Local Area Agreement.

In some local areas all key services for children and young people are being brought together within the Children's Trust. In these areas, the Children's Trust is taking on responsibility for planning and delivering care services, social services, education services and health services for children and young people aged 0 – 19. In other local areas the Children's Trust is focused on bringing together services for one particular group of children and young people. For

example, some pilot Children's Trusts have focused on integrating services for children with disabilities or children who are in care.

The work of Children's Trusts covers:

- assessing the needs of children and young people in the local area
- agreeing local priorities
- identifying what resources are available to address these
- planning how to use these resources for improved outcomes
- commissioning services as required

Some children's trusts may be mainly commissioning bodies, contracting with a range of agencies to deliver services, while others may become employers of the various professionals required to deliver these services including social workers, health visitors, educational psychologists, school nurses, family support workers, speech therapists etc. However, experience from the pilot Children's Trusts suggests that there are many technical difficulties in employing health professionals in public structures outside of the NHS.

The Government expects that Children's Trusts will take action to make sure that voluntary and community organisations are fully involved at every level. This should mean that all Children's Trusts have voluntary and community sector representation on their boards. It should also mean that the commissioning processes developed by Children's Trusts enable appropriate voluntary and community organisations to successfully compete to deliver services for children and young people.

Common Assessment Framework

One of the specific recommendations made by Lord Laming in his report of the inquiry into Victoria Climbié's death was the need for local authorities to 'establish reliable ways of assessing the needs and circumstances of children in their area, with particular reference to the needs of children who may be at risk of deliberate harm'. In response to this recommendation, the Department for Education and Skills has developed an assessment tool, called the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), for use by all services working with

children. The CAF has an initial checklist for assessing all children. The results of the CAF are supposed to trigger further specialist assessment if necessary.

The introduction of the CAF is taking some time. Not all local areas are using CAFs yet and others are using them in limited ways. For the CAF to work effectively, the different agencies which use it need to have linked information systems so that they can all have access to the completed CAFs. There is evidence that the development of shared IT systems is taking some time and is holding up effective sharing of CAFs.⁴

Local Safeguarding Children Boards

The Children's Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to replace the previous child protection procedures. The LSCB must include representatives from the following agencies:

- The local authority
- Police
- Probation service
- Youth Offending Team
- Strategic Health Authority and Primary Care Trust
- Children and Families Court Advisory Support Service
- Providers of education and training for 13-19 year olds
- Prison and youth custody services, if the young person is detained

LSCBs can also include representatives from other organisations which are recognised as relevant by the local authority and that other LSCB members also consider to be appropriate.

The LSCB co-ordinates what is done by each member organisation to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk and/or in need of protection within their local area

⁴ National Evaluation of Children's Trust Pathfinders Final Report, University of East Anglia, DfES and DoH, March 2007

Children's Centres

Children's Centres are located in local authorities and provide education, childcare, play activities and other services for children aged 0-5 and their families.

They are usually attached to a nursery, infant or primary school and some have Sure Start provision.

Extended Schools

Schools are seen as playing an important part in achieving the aims of Every Child Matters. In mid-2005 the Government published the first Extended Schools Prospectus which sets out the core offer of services that all children should be able to access through schools by 2010. This core offer includes:

- High quality childcare available 8am to 6pm all year round
- A varied menu of study support activities such as homework clubs and revision sessions
- Parenting support, including information sessions for parents/carers and family learning sessions
- Referrals to specialist support services such as speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, intensive behaviour support and sexual health services
- ICT, sport, art and adult learning for the wider community

In early 2007, over 3,800 schools, about one in six, were providing access to extended services.

Many schools are working in partnership with private and voluntary sector agencies to deliver extended services. Each local authority in England should now employ an Extended Schools Remodelling Adviser (ESRA). The ESRA is the key contact in the local authority for matters relating to extended schools. Any organisation wanting to know more about the extended schools agenda in their local area, and about ways of getting involved in this, should contact their local authority ESRA.

3. HOW BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS CAN BECOME INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

3.1 Why Should BME Groups get Involved in the Development of Children's Services?

Every Child Matters aims to ensure that all children can:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

Every child should enjoy these outcomes but we know that many BME children do not. Some groups of BME children and young people achieve significantly less well than white children and some BME populations are over-represented in the groups of children and young people which are particularly at risk. Major areas of concern are in educational achievement, poverty, employment opportunities and crime.

Educational Achievement

Some BME groups are still achieving lower than average educational qualifications and although the achievement rates are improving for most groups, black Caribbean, black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi children are still achieving lower GCSE results than white children. Of even greater concern are the GCSE achievement rates for children of mixed white/black Caribbean heritage which are not only well below the rates for white children but have declined rather than improved in recent years.

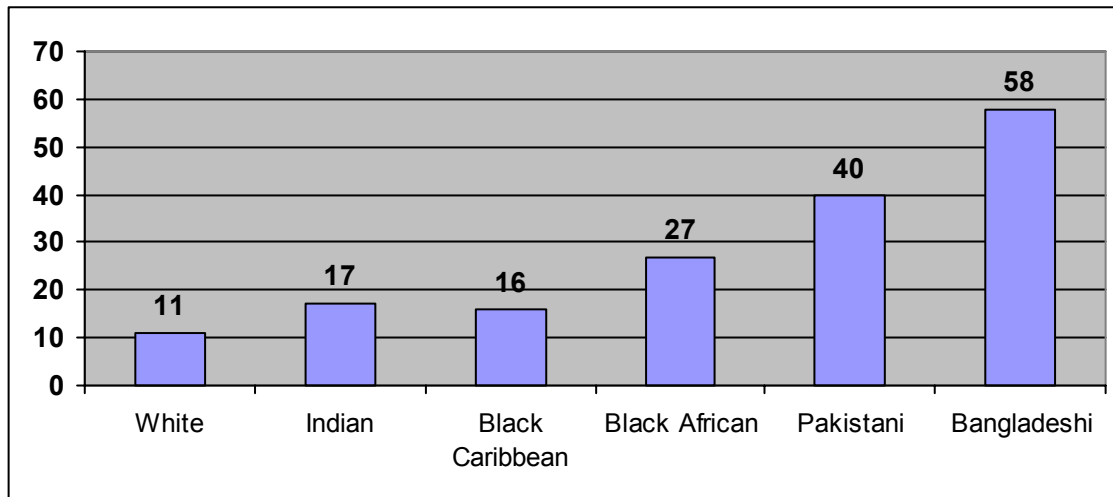
Achievement at GCSE: % achieving 5 A* - C [DfES]

Ethnic Group	% achieving 2003	% achieving 2004	% achieving 2005	% achieving 2006
White	51	52	55	58
Indian	65	67	70	72
Pakistani	42	45	48	51
Bangladeshi	46	48	53	57
Chinese	75	74	81	80
Black Caribbean	33	36	42	45
Black African	41	43	48	51
Mixed white/black Caribbean	49	50	44	47

Poverty

BME children and young people are far more likely to live in poverty than white children and young people. Around 20% of white people and around 40% of BME people live in income poverty (that is, their household income is less than 60% of the national average). More BME children live in poor households than do white children. About 25% of all white children live in poverty while almost 50% of all BME children live in poverty. For workless families, the differences in poverty rates between ethnic groups are relatively small. But for families who are working, poverty rates vary greatly for ethnic groups, with all BME groups having higher rates of poverty than white families.

Proportion (%) of Working Families in Income Poverty ⁵



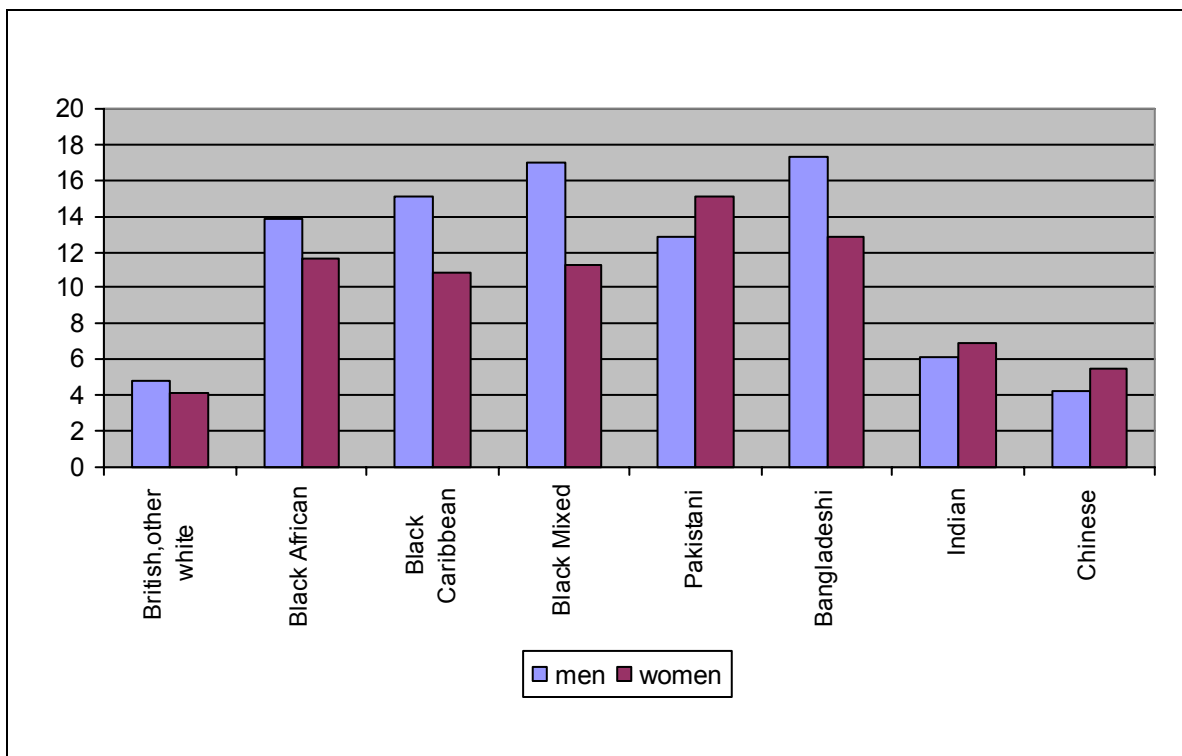
Employment

The employment rate for BME people is 61% compared to 75% for the population as a whole – a 14% gap. Progress in closing this gap is being closely monitored as one of the national floor targets set by the Government. But based on current targets it would take another 45 years for the gap to close completely.

All BME groups have higher unemployment rates than the white population, apart from the Chinese. Unemployment rates are highest for Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups.

⁵ Poverty and Different Ethnic Groups, New Policy Institute, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, March 2007

Unemployment Rates for Men and Women by Ethnic Group 2001-2004 [DWP]



Crime

Young BME people are greatly over-represented within the criminal justice system. A study of eight Youth Offending Teams which dealt with 17,054 cases in 2001-2 found that 65% of the young people were white and 28% BME (with no ethnicity recorded in the other 7% of cases). The study found disparities in the outcomes for BME young people at almost every stage in the criminal justice system including the following findings:

- Young men of mixed parentage were 2.7 times more likely to be prosecuted than white young men with similar case circumstances;
- The proportion of cases where young men were remanded in custody was higher for black (10%) and mixed parentage (13%) than for white (8%) young men;

- The chances of a young black male’s custodial sentence at a Crown Court being 12 months or longer were 6.7 times those of a white male.⁶

It is important that these and other issues for BME communities are recognised within local plans (including the Children and Young People’s Plan) and are taken into account when decisions about how to allocate resources are made. The needs of BME communities are far more likely to be built into local plans if BME groups are fully involved at every level and at every stage of the process.

3.2 Influencing at National Level

A number of stakeholder groups have been established to feed into the development and delivery of the Every Child Matters agenda. A key route for BME groups to find out how the national agenda is developing, and to influence its progress, is to contact appropriate members of these stakeholder groups.

BTEG is a member of some of these groups and provides regular briefings and updates about what developments are taking place. These can be found on the BTEG website at www.bteg.co.uk.

The Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) is also a member of some stakeholder groups and may be able to provide its members with more information. Contact information for CEMVO can be found on their website at www.emf-cemvo.co.uk.

Stakeholder Group	Main purpose	BME Representatives on this group
Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Issues Group	This VCSSIG works in partnership with DCSF to help achieve the Government target of increasing voluntary and community sector activity	BTEG CEMVO
Children, Young	Advises the Secretary of	none

⁶ Difference or Discrimination, Youth Justice Board, 2004

People and Families Board of Stakeholders	State for Children, Schools and Families on policy	
Expert Advisory Group on Young People	Advises the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families on the role of voluntary and community sectors and how to engage them	CEMVO
Family Services Voluntary and Community Sector Reference Group	Advises DCSF ministers on strategies for working with families and parents	none
Children's Fund Stakeholders Forum	Advisory Group on the Children's Fund	none
Participation Fund Voluntary and Community Sector Reference Group	Advisory Group on the Participation Fund	none
Third Sector Forum for Children and Young People's Services	Works with DCSF to help ensure a third sector focus to the Department's work on children and young people	BTEG

Influencing Local Strategies and Priorities

The arrangements for strategic decision making are different in every local area, so BME groups wanting to get involved may have to spend some time finding out how this works where they are. What is common to all areas is that strategic decision making in increasing numbers of policy areas takes place through partnerships, and these local partnerships are expected to be inclusive of all sections of the local community. In many areas this means that there are places for voluntary and community sector representatives on the partnerships, and in some areas there are specific places for BME community representatives on some key strategic partnerships.

Appendix 3 shows the strategic partnership arrangements in some local areas.

First Steps to Getting Involved in Local Strategic Decision Making

1. Find out if there is a BME network in your area. You can do this by contacting the regional BME network in your region. If there is a BME network, become a member. Local BME networks can become an influencing force if they have good backing from the BME organisations in the area.
2. Contact the Council for Voluntary Action (CVA) or Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) for your area. To find out where the CVS is in your area, contact the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) www.navca.org.uk or by phone on 0114 278 6636. Find out if your CVS represents the voluntary and community sector within the children and young people partnership, or on any education partnerships.
3. Join any networking or thematic groups organised by the CVS which are relevant to your main policy area e.g. children and young people. These are a very good source of up to date information and often have direct links to strategic decision making partnerships.
4. Contact your local authority to ask for information about the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for your area. The local authority may only give you contact details for the LSP, or they may provide you with more detailed information such as who is on the LSP.
5. Contact the LSP to find out who is on the Children and Young People's Partnership in your area. Once you have this information, contact any voluntary or community sector representatives to ask them for information about what the partnership is doing to include the voices of BME communities.
6. Get a copy of the Children and Young People Plan from your local authority. Ask the Children's Services department what the timetable is for reviewing the Plan and what the community

consultation process will be for this. Find out how your organisation can be part of the consultation.

7. Ask your ward councillor how the views of BME communities are taken into account in strategic decision making on children and young peoples services.
8. Attend public meetings to find out how they work. Although partnership meetings are not usually open to the public they are often run in similar ways to Council meetings, which are open to the public. You can usually get a list of the Council's committee meetings from the Council website. Anyone can go and watch the meetings and they are a useful way of learning about how local policy and decisions on public services are made. Groups within easy reach of London could also attend a meeting of the London Assembly.
9. Collect evidence to back up your views. BME groups have first hand experience of what the issues are for BME communities but are not always able to provide evidence of this in ways which policy makers recognise. There are considerable amounts of 'hard' evidence about the disparities for BME children and young people which you can use to strengthen any case you want to make to a local strategic partnership. See the section later in this guide on how to find evidence.

Local Strategic Partnerships

The role of the LSPs in relation to children's services varies from one area to another. In some local areas the links between the Children's Trust and the LSP appear quite weak but in other areas the Children's Trust is part of the LSP arrangement. Because LSPs are intended to be the overarching partnership in each local area so it makes sense for Children's Trusts to be part of the LSP structure and this will probably happen over time.

LSPs play a central role in negotiating Local Area Agreements (LAAs) with the Government. The LAA determines the priorities for each local area and how these will be achieved by public service delivery.

Children and young people is one of the four 'blocks' of activity covered by LAAs.

LSPs are made up of partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. LSPs are required to be representative of their local areas, so in areas with significant BME populations it could be expected that there would be BME representation on the LSP, although this is not always the case.

For more information about ways of becoming involved in LSPs, please see BTEG's publication 'Getting Involved in Local Strategic Partnerships'.

Children's Trusts

The arrangements for Children's Trusts are different in each local area. Because local arrangements are different the ways in which BME organisations can become directly involved will also vary from area to area. Some Children's Trusts have governance boards which are the Children's and Young People's Strategic Partnership, or part of it, and therefore directly linked into the LSP. Where this is the case, the route for BME organisations to become directly involved will be via the LSP (see the case study on Croydon BME Forum for an example of this). In other local areas the Children's Trust has a governance board made up of the primary partners such as the local authority, primary care trust and NHS Health Trust. These boards may have established links with groups of stakeholders in order to consult on initiatives and co-ordinate service delivery, and stakeholder groups may include voluntary and community groups.

Responding to Consultations

Local authorities are required to consult locally on their Children and Young People's Plan and there is an expectation from Government that the voluntary and community sector will be included in the consultation process. The way in which voluntary and community sector views on the Children and Young People's Plan are collected will be different in each local area but could include:

- Holding open meetings in public venues which anyone can go to;
- Inviting voluntary and community organisations who work with children and young people to comment on priorities or draft plans;
- Asking an umbrella body (e.g. the local Council for Voluntary Service) to comment on priorities or draft plans.

To get involved in the consultation process, a BME group may have to do some, or all of the following things:

- Become a member of your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). CVSs usually have close links with their local authorities and are part of the consultation process in many policy areas. Most local areas have a CVS.
- Join the local BME network, if there is one in your area. To find out if there is a BME network in your local area, contact your regional BME network. There is a BME network for each region in England (apart from the South East and West Midlands). In areas in which BME networks are established they are usually involved in local policy making processes.
- Ask the local authority Children's Services department if they have a consultation list, and if they have one, ask for your group to be added to it.
- Check the local authority website regularly for any information about consultation meetings, or on-line consultation surveys.

The Government also expects that children and young people will be directly consulted on what issues should have priority in the Children and Young People's Plan. In some local areas, this consultation takes place through the local Youth Council (a panel of young people who have been elected to represent the views of other young people in their school, college or neighbourhood). Other local areas may organise specific consultation events where young people can talk about what they want to directors and senior managers from the local authority, primary care trust and other agencies.

CROYDON BME FORUM

Croydon BME Forum was established in 2002 to provide a strategic voice for BME organisations in the London borough of Croydon.

The BME Forum has three main roles:

- Providing a voice for the BME community on the Croydon Strategic Partnership, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, and other strategic decision making partnerships in the borough;
- Helping to build the capacity of local BME organisations;
- Acting as the strategic race equality body for Croydon.

The BME Forum's 130 members are all Croydon based BME organisations. Members meet at the quarterly BME Forum meetings.

The BME Forum has also established five thematic groups to look more closely at BME issues in particular policy fields. Each thematic group also meets quarterly. The five thematic groups are for:

- Education
- Health and social care
- Community safety
- Employment and local economy
- Housing and environment

The BME Forum is steered by an elected Board and supported by a full time Director. The Forum receives funding from several sources including the London Borough of Croydon.

For BME organisations in Croydon, the BME Forum provides a direct route for ensuring that BME concerns are taken into account when decisions are made about the priorities for allocating public resources. The Forum is currently working on ways to achieve greater involvement of BME organisations in delivering services for children and young people through the Every Child Matters agenda.

For more information about the BME Forum contact the Director, Nero Ughwujabo at nero@bmeforum.org.

Service Delivery

The major re-organisation of services for children and young people should open up many opportunities for voluntary and community organisations to play a bigger role in service delivery. Some BME groups will be well placed to deliver specialist services commissioned by Children's Trusts and to deliver extended schools services. Which services are commissioned, and how they are commissioned, will vary from area to area, and will depend on what priorities are agreed in the Children and Young People Plan (which is why it is important that BME groups are involved in consultation on the CYPP). Services which BME groups may be able to deliver include:

- ESOL (English as a second or other language) supports children whose mother tongue is not English;
- Positive activities and diversionary activities to engage young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET);
- After school clubs or holiday play schemes.

Any organisation wanting to deliver these, or other services for the local authority or local children's trust will be required to have quality standards in place. To find out what the quality standard requirements are, contact the Children's Services directorate of your local authority. There should be a Joint Commissioning Officer in the Children's Services directorate who has responsibility for managing the commissioning process. Some CVSs will have programmes of training and development to help voluntary and community groups reach the quality standards required to deliver services in this area. Contact your local CVS to find out what support they offer in this area.

CROYDON SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT

Croydon Supplementary Education Project (CSEP) was established in 1982 to address the additional education needs of BME children. The project currently provides a Saturday school teaching Math and English to 150 children aged 4 to 18 and has a waiting list of 200. In addition to supplementary education, CSEP offers a range of other education initiatives which include drug and gun crime awareness, skills for life, mentoring and careers advice.

CSEP is closely involved in strategic partnerships in Croydon. The project is an active member of the Croydon BME Forum and has previously held the post of the BME Forum representative on the LSP.

Sasha Roden, Director of CSEP, believes it is important to become involved at the local strategic level. This involvement not only helps to ensure that BME issues are addressed but also gives him a clear understanding of the direction in which local policy and strategy are moving, which helps him position the organisation to benefit from future opportunities in funding or service delivery contracts. He says “The constant change in policy, priorities and funding simply means that to ensure continued assistance for your organisation’s beneficiaries, your organisation must become actively involved in advising, influencing and holding key decision makers accountable for their great visions, ideas and plans. Everyone in the voluntary sector should know how decisions are made in their local area and must have these decision makers on speed-dial”.

To find out more about the Croydon Supplementary Education Project visit their website at www.csep.org.uk.

Finding Evidence on BME Issues

To ensure that local policies and resources are being used to tackle issues for BME children and young people, BME organisations may need to provide evidence of the disparities for BME children and

young people. Although BME groups are easily able to provide 'soft' evidence based on their own experiences of working with young people, this does not always provide a strong enough case for how local resources should be prioritised. There is a great deal of 'hard' evidence available, particularly relating to the achievements of different ethnic groups in education. Much of this evidence can be used by local BME groups to strengthen the argument for why resources are needed to support work with BME children and young people, whether these arguments are being made in local strategic partnerships, or in consultation events, or in funding applications. Some key sources of 'hard' evidence are shown here:

Children's Services Departments

Children's Services Department's hold substantial information about pupils from different ethnic groups. This information is likely to include:

- Numbers of BME pupils in each school
- Numbers of school age BME pupils in the local authority area, including those who go to school in another local authority area
- Numbers of temporary and permanent school exclusions of BME pupils
- Levels of attainment of BME pupils at Key Stages, GCSE and A levels and how these compare to the average for the local authority area;
- The destinations of BME pupils leaving school.

Some LAs make this information available on their websites but others may need to be contacted by phone to ask for what is publicly available.

Pupil Annual School Level Census (PLASC)

This provides information on the educational attainment of pupils at Key Stages 1, 2 3 and 4 and is broken down to show results for different ethnic groups. PLASC data is available on-line via the Department for Children, Schools and Families website but can be difficult to use unless you are experienced in accessing and analysing numerical data.

The PLASC data can be accessed at www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000564/index.shtml

The Department for Children, Schools and Families

The DCSF produces many reports based on the PLASC data and these are available on their website. Many of these reports include information about issues for different ethnic groups. For DCSF statistical and research reports go to: www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway

The DCSF also publishes performance tables which show performance for each primary and secondary school, although there are no ethnic breakdowns within the information presented. The performance tables can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables

Government Offices for the Regions

The regional Government Offices help to deliver the Government's national strategies for education and for children and young people. The national Government Office website includes links to strategy documents for education and children and young people. The national website also provides links to the regional sites, where there is information on regional strategies in education and for children and young people. www.gos.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Statistics

A large amount of information about educational performance is available on the National Statistics website. The Neighbourhood Statistics section enables users to search for information for specific local areas and includes local data on education and skills. Some of this education information is broken down for different ethnic groups, for example, information about GCSE results at local authority level

by ethnic groups is available here.
www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Renewal

The Neighbourhood Renewal website contains useful information showing progress in achievement of the floor targets set by the Government in health, education, crime, worklessness, housing and liveability. The current national floor targets in education are:

- By 2008, 60% of those aged 16 to achieve the equivalent of 5 GCSEs at grades A* - C;
- Raise standards in English and maths so that by 2006, 85% of 11 year olds achieve level 4 or above...with this performance sustained to 2008;
- Raise standards in English, maths, science and ICT in secondary education so that by 2007, 85% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above in English, maths and ICT (80% in science) nationally, with this level of performance sustained to 2008;
- By 2008, 60% of those aged 16 to achieve the equivalent of 5 GCSEs at grades A* - C, and in all schools at least 20% of pupils to achieve this standard by 2004, rising to 25% by 2006 and 30% by 2008;
- Raise standards in English and maths so that by 2008 the proportion of schools in which fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above is reduced by 40%;
- Raise standards in English, maths and science in secondary education so that by 2008 in all schools at least 50% of pupils achieve level 5 in English, maths and science [at key stage 3].

Progress in achieving these targets is shown on the floor targets interactive website

www.fti.neighbourhood.gov.uk

On Line Race Resource for Improving Outcomes in Neighbourhoods (ORRION)

The ORRION website has been developed to provide resources for people working to achieve race equality in regeneration and renewal areas. The website contains many useful guides and research reports in a range of policy areas including education, worklessness, health, crime and housing. All reports can be freely downloaded. The education section includes up to date reports on the educational attainment of BME pupils. The ORRION website address is www.renewal.net/toolkits/OrrionToolkit

The National Literacy Trust

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity which is working to improve literacy. Their website has a very useful section on the literacy and education levels of different ethnic groups in the UK. www.literacytrust.org.uk/Database/stats/EALstats.html

Commission for Racial Equality

The CRE research department undertakes its own analysis of PLASC data to look at trends in education for children from different ethnic groups. Key findings from the CRE analysis can be found on their website: www.cre.gov.uk/research/statistics_education.html

Youth Justice Board

For research information on young people in the criminal justice system, including some research which looks specifically at the experience of different ethnic groups, go to the Youth Justice Board website www.yjb.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 1

BME REGIONAL NETWORKS

North West ONE NORTH WEST 2 nd Floor, Albert House, 17 Bloom Street Manchester M1 3HZ 0161 236 6493 info@nwnetwork.org.uk www.nwnetwork.org.uk	North East NORTH EAST BECON 8 Jesmond Road West Newcastle NE2 4 PU 0191 245 3850 info@becon.com.uk www.becon.org.uk
East Midlands VOICE EAST MIDLANDS 66 Carlton Road Nottingham NG3 2AP 0115 950 8820 admin@voice-em.org.uk www.voice-em.org.uk	Yorkshire & Humberside Yorkshire & the Humber BME Regional Network Quest House 243 Manningham Lane Bradford BD8 7ER justchannel@hotmail.com
London MINET Suite 101, Cremer Business Centre 37 Cremer Street London E2 8HD 020 7729 1310 rota@rota.org.uk www.rota.org.uk	East of England MENTER 62 - 64 Victoria Road Cambridge CB4 3DU 01223 355034 info@menter.org.uk www.menter.org.uk
South West BLACK SOUTH WEST NETWORK	South East There is currently no regional BME network in the South East.

<p>5 Russell Town Avenue Redfield Bristol BS5 9LT 0117 939 6648 reception@bswn.org.uk www.bswn.org.uk</p>	<p>West Midlands</p> <p>There is currently no regional BME network in the West Midlands.</p>
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APPENDIX 2

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE RACE EQUALITY DUTY

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 gives public authorities a legal responsibility to promote race equality. The public authorities which are listed in the Act include:

- Central government departments
- Local authorities
- Health trusts and boards
- Police forces
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Regional development agencies

The Act gives these authorities a general duty to 'have regard to the need to':

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equal opportunities
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

Most public authorities have also been given specific duties to help meet these general duties. These involve preparing and publishing a **race equality scheme**, and **monitoring** staff and job applicants by racial group. A race equality scheme should be a detailed plan that sets out how the authority intends to meet the race equality duty. It must include an assessment of the authority's functions and policies, to see which of these are relevant to promoting race equality. The race equality scheme must also detail the authority's arrangements to monitor its policies for any adverse impact they might have on promoting race equality, generally undertaken through a **race equality impact assessment**. Public authorities are required to publish their race equality schemes and the results of their assessments, consultations and monitoring.

The duty to promote race equality applies to all of the key public authorities involved in planning and delivering children's services such as local authorities, NHS trusts, Primary Care Trusts and schools. The duty does not apply directly to partnerships, such as the Local Strategic Partnerships and Children's Trusts. The public authorities in these partnerships must ensure that their responsibilities under the duty are carried through to the partnership. These authorities must make sure that the partnership takes account of the race equality duty in its work.

For more information about the race equality duty visit the Commission for Racial Equality website www.cre.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 3

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR THE REGION

