

Keeping Children at Heart campaigning for a better future for children and young people

Kathy Evans, CEO, Children England

Karina Nyananyo, Service Manager, 42nd Street

Mitchell Mullins, Youth Mayor

Laura Edwards, Councillor, Salford City Council

Kathy Evans, CEO Children England

Kathy showed several campaigns that Children England have produced highlighting the different methods that can be used when campaigning. She informed the group that for every successful campaign there have been five that have failed, and encouraged people to keep trying if it does not seem to work the first time.

Examples of campaigns:

Keep profit out of child protection

This campaign highlighted the power of people, after thousands of people signed a petition a proposal to allow local authorities in England to privatise child protection was abandoned.

Declaration of Independence

This highlights a collaborative approach with charities and the public sector working together on an agreed charter.

Open to all

This campaign is about how the sector or an organisation can make change happen. With the increased expense of going to university and having a degree this campaign questions the necessity of degrees in our sector. There are thousands of people working in the sector without degrees. The Voluntary sector will be even stronger and more inclusive if it is open to all.

How are councils expected to cope after 2020?

Child protection would rely only on income from local business rates and council tax.

During the election in 2017, a campaign was run explaining the changes to child services due to cuts and raised awareness and understanding in people of the council's position. You cannot campaign unless people are aware and understand the area you are campaigning about.

ChildFair State

A society that has children at heart is a better society for everyone. This campaign highlights giving children and young people a voice.

Karina Nyananyo, Service Manager, 42nd Street

Karina explained that 42nd street was a mental health project for children and young people that been running for 39 years. The project has a focus on depression and anxiety and provides 1:1 support along with peer groups. Young people have a voice and are able to tell their stories together. They get angry but talking together within peer groups helps.

42nd Street also train young people to carry out peer to peer research as young people know what the issues are, young people talk differently to each other than they would to an adult.

42nd street found that young black men were not using the service and wanted to know why and if they were going for help elsewhere. As local statistics show there is a need for mental health support within this demographic. The young people carried out research identifying the following reasons:

- Don't trust you
- Don't know what mental health is
- Manage through religion
- Don't see anyone that looks like me come out the other side ok.

From this, a video was created of a young black man talking about mental health and surviving.

Karina spoke about how the Jewish community also don't access there services and research found that for cultural reasons 42nd Street was not the service for this community as they would prefer to speak to their own family and friends. Support was offered to families to educate around mental health.

Karina highlighted how young people are embedded into 42nd Street and are involved in every part or the organisation and how the project is shaped including:

- Research
- Project design
- Recruitment
- Board members
- Building design
- Campaigning

When building 42nd Street base the young people was consulted on what they wanted and visited other building for ideas and imputed into the designs of the building.

42nd street are currently running the following two campaigns:

Make Our Rights Reality Ambassadors at 42nd Street

To empower businesses to support people with mental health when someone is going through a bad time it can be hard to keep a job, therefore there is a need for employers to be more supportive.

Peer Ambassadors Campaign

To raise mental health awareness across Greater Manchester with a focus on how life transitions impact on health and improving the transition from CAMHS to AMHS.

Peer Ambassadors and MORR Ambassadors share an Instagram page, Karina asked that people follow the ambassadors on twitter.

42nd_ambassadors

#THRIVE #MORR42ndstreet #42ndstreetambassadors #thriveMORR #42nd street

The Horsfall Instagram:

thehorsfall_42ndstreet

Mitchell Mullins, Youth Mayor 2019/20

Mitchell explained that he was the Youth Mayor for 2019/20, and was a member of the Youth Council. The Youth Council work to ensure young people are equally represented in Salford. Mitchell described the different ways in which Salford is empowering their young people:

- Hold positions in the form of office by being a member of the Youth Parliament, Youth Council and the Youth Mayor
- Allow young people to hold events where they can question City Leaders, meet the City Leaders and also take over Salford City Council for a day
- Provides opportunities to criticise departments that deal with young people and offer feedback for services and act on the feedback they received. Fight for Change, is a project where young people who are looked after by the Social Services are asked what is important to them, what they want to see change.
- Salford Council assist young people in finding a venue, equipment, staff or any other requirements.
- Events held by young people are attended by the Council showing the work they are doing is not going unnoticed and providing support and encouragement.
- The Youth Mayor will run campaigns during their term of office. Mitchell is running a campaign for more volunteer opportunities for young people and rewarding people who volunteer. He is also doing some outreach work to find out what young people want in the city to take back to the Youth Council.
- Salford City Council is supportive in empowering young people and working with them to help set things up in Salford that are wanted/needed.

The Youth Council is made up of representatives from schools, areas of youth groups and facilitate change for youth people, help and advice on how you can progress a campaign or project. The Youth Council has set priorities for the year from issues which have been raised from young people. This year they are looking at:

- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Knife crime and how it affects families
- Homelessness

Laura Edwards, Councillor, Salford City Council

Laura provided some background on her past experience, she was a member of the Youth Council, after college she worked for the Gaddum Centre Young People service and now is a Councillor at Salford City Council.

Working for the Council she is in a position of power and accountability and does the best she can to represent people to the best of her ability. She has visited every school in her ward (Walkden South) and is working with schools to increase interaction with the Council encouraging them to attend meetings. Laura is also a Governor of a local school and also works with the neighbourhood team.

Laura had poor experience with CAMHS and feels a mental health strategy is lacking in regards to the needs of children and young people.

Q & A session

1) Laura, you spoke about mental health in young people what key change would you like to see?

Laura would like to see a single access point for children and young people with mental health issues. At moment they go to a service tell them the problem to be told the service is not suitable and then have to go to another service and start all over again and the same thing can occur.

There is a need for one access point where help is provided straight away and the young person does not have to keep repeating the issue or starting again.

At the moment they only offer is 1:1 therapy that doesn't work for young people need more than talking therapy.

2) How do you manage and help support children and young people when parents are not on the same wave length, empowering the children? Especially with social division and cultural habits?

Work with the community first, engage with families first by holding an open day or community event. You have to adapt to the people you are working with to see what would fit best their circumstances. Once they understand what you are offering and the benefits to them the child there is less resistance.

Sometimes it can also be dependent on what you want to engage with the children and young people about. For example a family felt strong that they did not want their children being taught sex education. When this was looked into parents were

concerned that the children would know more on the subject than then parent. Joint sessions were introduced.

3) How can we move on, we are still campaigning for better mental health provision / CAMHS. However, CAMHS Salford achieved outstanding two years in a row, but on the ground people are experiencing different. What can be done to fuse together young people voices, with the statutory inspectors? Are there young inspectors?

Mental health has been identified as the top two issues on the youth parliament survey.

Ofsted has become better over years, need to think radically about inspection. European Council have informed Ofsted need to come to them when investigating and hear information they have.

Rate on child rather than date of visit. Ask young people questions.

4) How are BME and young people involved in Youth council / parliament? We have been working on crime and gang violence wanting to provide a different narrative than seen in the media. Young people fed back that they don't see how they fit in and don't see people that look like them.

The Youth Council have become more diverse representing cultural and minorities so people do feel more comfortable. Work is still needed in the Youth Council to reflect the community of Salford. Youth Parliament has an even longer journey to go.

We are working on an event later on in the year on knife and gang violence for children and young people.

There are activity groups popping up in Salford with the support of the Council to help deal with these issues and keep the children off the streets. However these need to be publicised more and be more accessible.

5) How to support young people to campaign without being led by adults?

Things are very service led rather than young people lead at moment. Any offers should be available for everyone, encourage additional needs into activities.

Make sure you listen to young people on what they want and need.

Three Actions Identified
Develop Young Inspectors programme Addressing disconnection between Young People's real life experiences of services and how professionals perceive them. Exposing failure and celebrating success.
Diversity and inclusivity plan making political opportunities more accessible and inclusive for young people from BME groups, those who have additional needs or those living in poverty. Ensure that young people from these groups are given the same opportunities as their peers in terms of campaigning and voice and that these are Young People led not service led.
Develop a practical advice guide for how services need to improve created by Young People.