

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Hear Our Voice!
Young People's Views of
Policy Priorities for
The Scottish Parliament
May 2008

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

INDEX

Executive Summary	P.3
Introduction	P.4
Methodology	P.6
Who Took Part?	P.8
What Did They Say?	P.11
Conclusion	P.15
Contacts	P.15
Appendices	P.16

**Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Action for Children Scotland approached Young Scot, wishing to gather the views of young people and to identify issues that young people felt that the Scottish Parliament should prioritise in future work. Young Scot supported Action for Children Scotland in carrying out a survey of young people in the Action for Children Scotland network. The survey was run by Young Scot and Action for Children Scotland in partnership with Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council, Highland Council and Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People.

The survey was carried out both offline and online, and through SMS mobile messaging. The survey went live on the National Youth Information Portal www.youngscot.org on 22nd October 2007 and stayed live until 22nd February 2008. During this time there were 524 respondents with six responses from SMS messages.

This report details the outcome, and detailed feedback from young people collected throughout the consultation. Key findings from the consultation show that:

The consultation received a total of 530 responses from young people across Scotland. 524 of these were online and offline entries, with six SMS entries.

17.18% of young people in Scotland believe that 'reducing poverty' should be the main priority for the Scottish Parliament.

12.21% of young people in Scotland believe that 'tackling homelessness' should be the second priority for the Scottish Parliament.

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

13.36% of young people in Scotland believe that 'providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities' should be the third priority for the Scottish Parliament.

INTRODUCTION

Young Scot is the national youth information agency for Scotland, providing young people aged 11–26 years with a mixture of ideas, information and incentives to:

- Allow young people to make informed decisions and choices about their lives
- Turn their ideas into action
- Take advantage of the opportunities available in Scotland and throughout the rest of Europe
- Have the confidence and knowledge to become active citizens in their communities

Young Scot achieves these aims through the provision of an integrated youth information package, offering young people access to information and services through a variety of media, including books, magazines and web-enabled services, including www.youngscot.org - the national youth information portal.

Seeking the views of young people across the country is a key part of Young Scot's work. To ensure that this is done effectively, Young Scot has developed Loud+Clear, an online and offline consultation toolkit. Using the range of consultation tools that Loud+Clear provides, Young Scot can engage with young people in ways that are relevant and accessible to them.

There are currently over 340,000 Young Scot members, with young people offered the opportunity to join via our partnership local authority network Dialogue Youth.

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Action for Children Scotland is one of the leading children's charities in Scotland, working in partnership to run more than 65 services for more than 7000 of Scotland's most vulnerable children, young people and their families. Across the UK it runs nearly 500 services.

Action for Children Scotland approached Young Scot, wishing to gather the views of young people and to identify issues that young people felt that the Scottish Parliament should prioritise in future work. Young Scot supported Action for Children Scotland to carry out a survey of young people across Action for Children Scotland's services, and across the services for young people provided by Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council and Highland Council.

The survey was carried out both offline and online on www.youngscot.org and through SMS mobile messaging. The survey went live on 22nd October 2007 and stayed live until 22nd February 2008. During this time there were 530 respondents.

The survey was promoted through Action for Children Scotland networks, the Young Scot website and Local Authority partners.

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

METHODOLOGY

Young Scot and Action for Children Scotland, in partnership with SCCYP, Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council and Highland Council set out to identify what young people within the Action for Children Scotland network, and within the networks of our local authority partners, felt should be the key priorities of the Scottish Parliament.

Ten priorities were outlined by Action for Children Scotland, along with an option to provide an alternative priority through an open option, 'Other.' Young people from the above network were asked to choose their top three priorities in order of importance. The full list of priorities was:

- Reducing poverty
- Taking action to stop all bullying
- Promoting children and young people's rights
- Improving children and young people's health and well-being
- Increasing support to vulnerable families
- Tackling homelessness amongst young people
- Increasing opportunities for young people in education, employment and training
- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities
- Putting a stop to the physical punishment of all children
- Other (please specify)

Three local authorities were identified by Action for Children Scotland to help take part in the consultation – The Highland Council, Dundee City Council and East Ayrshire Council.

The main focus of the survey was on those groups of young people aged 11+ who are difficult to reach. Action for Children Scotland were particularly keen to obtain the views of the following groups of young people accessing the services of partners: young people with disabilities, looked

Hear Our Voice

Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

after and accommodated children and young people, young people accessing youth justice services, young refugees and asylum seekers, LGBT young people and other groups of young people who are excluded and disengaged.

It was decided to provide the survey online, offline and through SMS (Short Message Service) message. The survey was available online through the Young Scot Loud+Clear toolkit. As well as asking the young people to choose their top three priorities, the survey also asked for demographic details, such as age and geographical area, and the opportunity to give further details on why they chose their priorities.

An offline version of the survey was also created, mirroring the online version. This offline version was supplied through the Action for Children Scotland network and through the local authority partners to young people. The completed paper copies of the consultation were returned to Action for Children Scotland and Young Scot to be collated with the online results.

The opportunity was also provided for young people to vote on their top priorities by using their mobile phones. Each priority was attributed a corresponding letter, and young people within the Action for Children Scotland network could send in an SMS message indicating their top choices by letter within the body of the text. For example, if they felt that option 'A', 'Reducing Poverty' was their top choice, followed by option 'B', 'Taking action to stop all bullying' and option 'C', 'Promoting children and young people's rights' being their third choice, they would include the keyword 'NCH' and their choice ABC in their text message. Each text that came in was delivered to Young Scot by email.

The reasons given by the young people about why they voted for a particular option, and general feedback about related matters, including the survey and the work of the Scottish Parliament can be found in the appendix to this report.

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Prior experience of consultation work has shown that incentivising the work can lead to a higher response rate. As such, all entries of online and offline surveys and SMS messages were entered into an overall prize draw, with the winners being drawn from all entries. The winners were then notified, and the prizes distributed. Prizes included two Nintendo Wii video game systems, 4 Apple iPods and a variety of Tesco gift vouchers. The prizes were provided by John Lewis (Edinburgh), Action for Children Scotland, Tescos and Young Scot.

WHO TOOK PART?

There were 524 respondents. Not all respondents answered all the questions. There was no demographic information from SMS entries.

What Age Are You?

Respondents were aged between 7 and 26 years old, with 27.48% of respondents aged 15 and 16 years old.

7	1	0.19%
8	4	0.76%
9	3	0.57%
10	14	2.67%
11	12	2.29%
12	54	10.31%
13	53	10.11%
14	65	12.40%
15	72	13.74%
16	72	13.74%
17	66	12.60%
18	26	4.96%
19	17	3.24%
20	3	0.57%
21	7	1.34%
22	1	0.19%
23	3	0.57%
24	4	0.76%
26	1	0.19%
No answer	46	8.78%
Totals	524	100.00%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Are You:

Just over half of the respondents (53.63%) were male. 46.37% were female.

Male	281	53.63%
Female	243	46.37%
Totals	524	100.00%

Which local authority do you live in?

The highest number of respondents, 21.18%, came from within The Highland Council area, one of the partnership local authorities in the consultation. The next highest came from Glasgow City Council, with 15.46%, and then Dundee City Council, another of the partnership authorities, with 11.83%,.

Aberdeenshire	10	1.91%
Angus	1	0.19%
Argyll & Bute	3	0.57%
Clackmannanshire	26	4.96%
Dumfries & Galloway	7	1.34%
Dundee	62	11.83%
East Ayrshire	2	0.38%
East Dunbartonshire	10	1.91%
East Lothian	2	0.38%
East Renfrewshire	5	0.95%
Edinburgh	22	4.20%
Falkirk	2	0.38%
Fife	7	1.34%
Glasgow	81	15.46%
Highland	111	21.18%
Inverclyde	24	4.58%
Midlothian	4	0.76%
Moray	2	0.38%
North Ayrshire	15	2.86%
North Lanarkshire	22	4.20%
Perth & Kinross	3	0.57%
Renfrewshire	16	3.05%
Scottish Borders	2	0.38%
Shetland	1	0.19%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

South Ayrshire	31	5.92%
South Lanarkshire	6	1.15%
Stirling	7	1.34%
West Dunbartonshire	9	1.72%
West Lothian	4	0.76%
Western Isles	1	0.19%
Not given	26	4.96%
Totals	524	100.00%

How did you hear about this survey?

38.74% of respondents heard about the survey through promotion by Action for Children Scotland.
27.86% heard about the survey through Young Scot.

Friends/family	7	1.34%
Action for Children Scotland	203	38.74%
School	47	8.97%
Young Scot	146	27.86%
Your local authority	36	6.87%
Youth group	53	10.11%
Other	11	2.10%
No answer	21	4.01%
Totals	524	100.00%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

WHAT DID THE YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

PRIORITIES

Online Results

First choice

17.18% of respondents said that they felt that 'Reducing Poverty' should be the first priority of the Scottish Parliament. This was followed by 'Taking Action to Stop All Bullying' with 13.74% and Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour with 11.26%.

Reducing poverty	90	17.18%
Taking action to stop all bullying	72	13.74%
Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	59	11.26%
Tackling homelessness amongst young people	46	8.78%
Promoting children and young people's rights	38	7.25%
Increasing opportunities for young people in education employment and training	36	6.87%
Putting a stop to the physical punishment of all children	32	6.11%
Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities	31	5.92%
Improving children and young people's health and well-being	20	3.82%
Increasing support to vulnerable families	17	3.24%
Other	14	2.67%
No answer	69	13.17%
Totals	524	100.00%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Second choice

12.21% of respondents felt the second most important priority for the Scottish Parliament was 'Tackling Homelessness Amongst Young People', followed by 'Increasing Opportunities for Young People in Employment and Training' with 10.50% and 'Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour' with 10.31%.

Tackling homelessness amongst young people	64	12.21%
Increasing opportunities for young people in education employment and training	55	10.50%
Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	54	10.31%
Taking action to stop all bullying	53	10.11%
Increasing support to vulnerable families	39	7.44%
Reducing poverty	39	7.44%
Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities	37	7.06%
Putting a stop to the physical punishment of all children	29	5.53%
Promoting children and young people's rights	28	5.34%
Other	10	1.91%
No answer	76	14.50%
Totals	524	100.00%

Third choice

13.36% of respondents said that 'Providing Young People with More Leisure and Cultural Opportunities' should be the third most important priority for the Scottish Parliament. This was followed by 'Reducing Crime and Anti-social Behaviour' on 10.88% and 'Increasing Opportunities for Young People in Education, Employment and Training' on 8.59%.

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities	70	13.36%
Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	57	10.88%
Increasing opportunities for young people in education employment and training	45	8.59%
Tackling homelessness amongst young people	44	8.40%
Putting a stop to the physical punishment of all children	43	8.21%
Taking action to stop all bullying	39	7.44%
Improving children and young people's health and well-being	34	6.49%
Increasing support to vulnerable families	34	6.49%
Promoting children and young people's rights	33	6.30%
Reducing poverty	26	4.96%
Other	17	3.24%
No answer	82	15.65%
Totals	524	100.00%

SMS RESULTS

There were six respondents to the consultation by SMS. As with the online results, the priorities were fairly evenly spread.

First choice

Reducing Poverty	2	33.33%
Taking action to stop all bullying	1	16.67%
Promoting children and young people's rights	1	16.67%
Tackling homelessness amongst young people	1	16.67%
Increasing opportunities for young people in education,	1	16.67%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

employment and training		
Total	6	100%

Second Choice

Reducing Poverty	2	33.33%
Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour	2	33.33%
Tackling homelessness amongst young people	1	16.67%
Increasing opportunities for young people in education	1	16.67%
Total	6	100%

Third Choice

Reducing poverty	1	16.67%
Taking action to stop all bullying	1	16.67%
Improving children and young people's health and well-being	1	16.67%
Increasing support to vulnerable families	1	16.67%
Tackling homelessness amongst young people	1	16.67%
Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities	1	16.67%
Total	6	100.00%

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament

CONCLUSION

Drawing from the survey, figures for each of the priorities chosen by the young people were fairly evenly spread. Although 'Reducing poverty' came first, 'Tackling homelessness amongst young people' second and 'Providing young people with more leisure and cultural opportunities' came third, none of the priorities held a significant lead over those priorities chosen next.

The gender split of respondents was also even, whilst most were aged between 11 and 17 years old. The largest number of respondents came from The Highland Council area, one of the partnership local authorities, followed by Glasgow City Council and Dundee City Council, another partnership local authority. 29 of the 32 local authorities were represented.

Young Scot was delighted to work with Action for Children Scotland and our other partners on this piece of work, and hope the findings from the young people will help to influence the policy priorities of the Scottish Parliament, and the development of its work in key policy areas. We look forward to opportunities where we can continue to work together to ensure young people across Scotland are given the opportunity to express their views on this important issue.

CONTACTS

Martin Dewar, Senior Development Office (Online), Young Scot
Tel: 0131 313 2488
Email: martind@youngscot.org

Robert McGeachy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Action for Children Scotland
Tel: 0141-550-9010
Email: Robert.mcgeachy@actionforchildrenscotland.org.uk

Hear Our Voice
Young People's Views of Policy Priorities for The Scottish Parliament