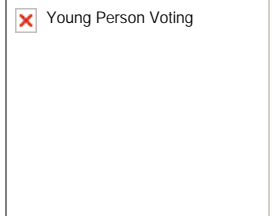


Bullying is What Matters Most

Young Journalists from Headliners report back from the 11 Million three-day Annual Event, where young people from around England have decided it's bullying that matters most.

The 11 Million residential...what can I say? The residential was filled with laughs, cries and the occasional argument and the most talked about issue – the AWFUL FOOD.



The people who came to the residential consisted of the 11 Million staff, the Children's Commissioner for England, the One Team (the young people who organised the event) and 115 young people from around England. The aim of the event was to hear about the views of young people in England and let them decide what issue England's Children's Commissioner, Sir Al Aynsley Green, should be spending £125,000 on.

The residential wasn't all fun and games. We had to work really hard to decide which was the most important issue for young people in England. We had 14 issues to choose from. They included transport, the government's job, international issues, respect and discrimination, bullying and many more.

We interviewed lots of young people about which issue was most important to them and which issue they voted on. Queenie, 15, from the UK Youth Parliament said that she chose ASBOs as the most important issue; "I think all the things that they're given for aren't fair."

The event went according to plan for Queenie, but the only thing she said she would change was the dormitories and the refreshments.

The food and refreshments was also the thing that 11-year-old Moradeyo from Young Life would change. Moradeyo chose the issues of bullying, and health and happiness. "I think the most important one is bullying because bullying is leading kids around the world, not only in England, to try and succeed in killing themselves and it's stressing them out before it's their time to get stressed."

Cerrie from Young Life also agreed with Moradeyo; she also chose bullying and her main concern was the nasty food.

We also met Lladel, 18, from Leeds who is from an organisation called Reemap. "I chose violence, abuse and bullying, because it's most important to me personally, as it's an issue which I have had to address as a young man. There's a lot of violence in my area of Leeds."

Overall the young people who attended the 11 Million Annual event all had a great time and went home with happy faces. We all got on well and it was a shame we had to leave. But it was a great experience for us all and we learnt loads. It should definitely continue.

After the event, Sir Al Aynsley-Green, the Children's Commissioner for England, said: "Overall the event was a huge success – the children and young people took their responsibility of making such a key decision very seriously, and had a great time doing it."

"There were of course some things that we would look to improve at next year's event, and one of those would be the food. I had lots of comments that it was pretty horrendous – and I have to admit that I didn't like it either!"

About this article

This article was written by Odaka Olugu, 13, with help from Ghizlan Akerbousse, 14. Interviews by Ghizlan, Odaka, Chisom Edomobi, 15, and Gabby Ali Craig, 10.

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