

Amplify

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ANV National Voices Networking Event

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getting young voices heard

Coram Voice

**‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’
Engagement Work - Feedback**

**Session 5 Embracing
Diversity: A Workshop on
Disability & Inclusion**

Session 5 - Embracing Diversity: A Workshop on Disability & Inclusion

The in-person workshop took place on Wednesday 25 October as part of the Amplify event.

The workshop focused on exploring what disability and long-term health conditions mean to children and young people and how services can best support children and young people who identify that they have a disability or long-term health condition.

Who we heard from:

A total of 18 young people attended the session. They were aged 15-25+ and were from across England.



What does disability (or long-term health condition) mean to you?



- Long term illness that affects your life.
- Special needs.
- Miss-diagnosis.
- Neurodiversity – associated pain.
- Everyone will have needs of some kind.
- Stigma around diagnosis – understanding.
- Professionals pass us to other workers who can't provide us with the necessary services.
- Accessibility.
- Wheelchair.

What does disability (or long-term health condition) mean to you?

- Borderline personality disorder (BPD).
- Autism – not disorder, it's who you are.
- Travel problems/ Toilets.
- Acceptance.
- Separation.
- Hidden/ physical/ mental disability.
- Placement breakdown due to hospital admissions.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- High functioning means that my disability doesn't affect you.
- Emotional impairment.
- Support.
- You cannot be 'a little bit' something.
- Validating to have diagnosis – so you know how to manage your needs.
- Lack of accessibility to services/ Don't meet the threshold.
- Protected characteristic.
- Disorder/ syndrome – different terms, can be damaging.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP).



How can children and young people with a disability or long-term health conditions be best supported?

- When someone tells you an illness is impacting their life, listen and fully explore.
- Better CAMHS – CMHT transition.
- Preventative support, more funding for early help.
- Be adaptable on thresholds – multiple visits at varying times to see the whole picture.
- Individual care plans – gain young people's voices.
- Promote culture of inclusion – positive messaging about diagnosis and labels.
- Try to normalize disabilities.
- Make school/ college more appropriate for humans rather than drones.
- Recognize female neurodiversity earlier .
- Be adaptable and creative – resources and training for nonverbal/ disengaged young people.
- Multi-agency working WORK TOGETHER.
- Have a consistent approach across all UK – no postcode lottery and better communication
- Why box people in?





What do you want to tell the DfE?

- We would like to normalise disability and make society more aware of the difficulties so many people fall every day and try to find more solutions to help them.
- Please consider changing ages for accessing services. It should not be dependent on age.
- I have never understood why the UK education system works against all research for optimal learning conditions. Why test so frequently so young? Why allow SATs to be so dominant. Why not have more skill based lessons?
- I can't get counselling, because of my diagnosis of personality disorder because of the stigma around it and any other support classed as "too complicated" or not appropriate.



What do you want to tell the DfE?

- We should be able to use more than one service at a time!! We need all the support we can get – not one at a time.
- Not all disabilities need a diagnosis and are visible.
- People shouldn't have to have an EHCP in college to get the right support. Recognizing that everyone isn't going to learn the same.
- Get rid of the new national standards.
- Have a more centralized policy that all of the UK uses, and involve young people more (be creative and adaptive).
- Give funding to SEN, support SEN more and open spaces in and more SEN provisions. It is shocking currently and SEN kids deserve education.
- More safe spaces.

Key messages for policy teams:



Young people believe there should be more training provided to professionals to spot early signs of disability or additional needs as well as ways to support children and young people with a diagnosis long-term.



Young people highlighted barriers such as high thresholds, age restrictions, lack of services or long waiting times to support.



Young people highlighted the difficulties in transitioning from children's social care to adult services.



Young people feel that listening to the voice of children and young people and being involved in understanding their condition and decision making is really important.



Services should strive to be inclusive and break down the stigma of disability.



There is a postcode lottery for support and some children and young people are traveling long distances for support.

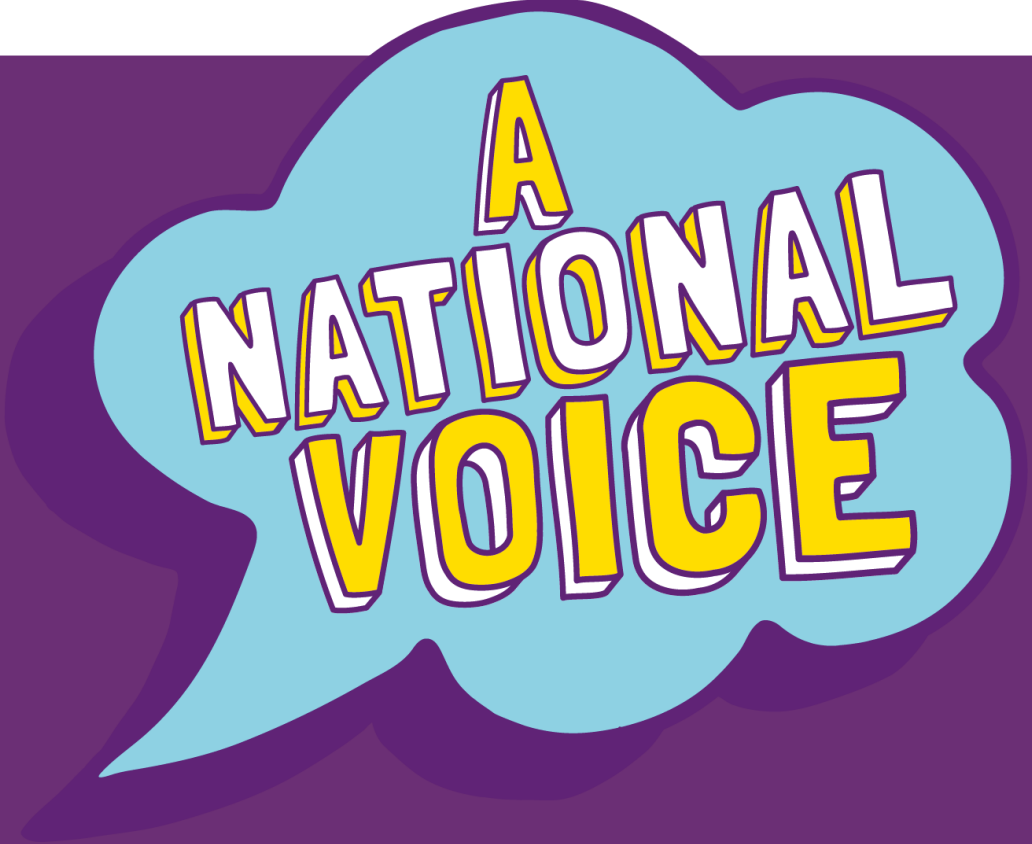


Young people highlight that relationships take time, trust, understanding and empathy to develop.

Further information

Check out other [online session](#) dates for future sessions

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch at: ANV@coramvoice.org.uk



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