



Championing advice and counselling

Building the youth rights movement

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Young People's Legal Rights Conference, 11/05/18



Championing advice and counselling

Youth Access

*The national membership body for Youth
Information, Advice and Counselling
Services (YIACS)*

What we'll cover



- **Evidence** – YP's access to justice; links with mental health
- **Make Our Rights Reality** – public legal education, social action and campaigning
- How you can get involved in building **the youth rights movement**

Access to Justice for young people

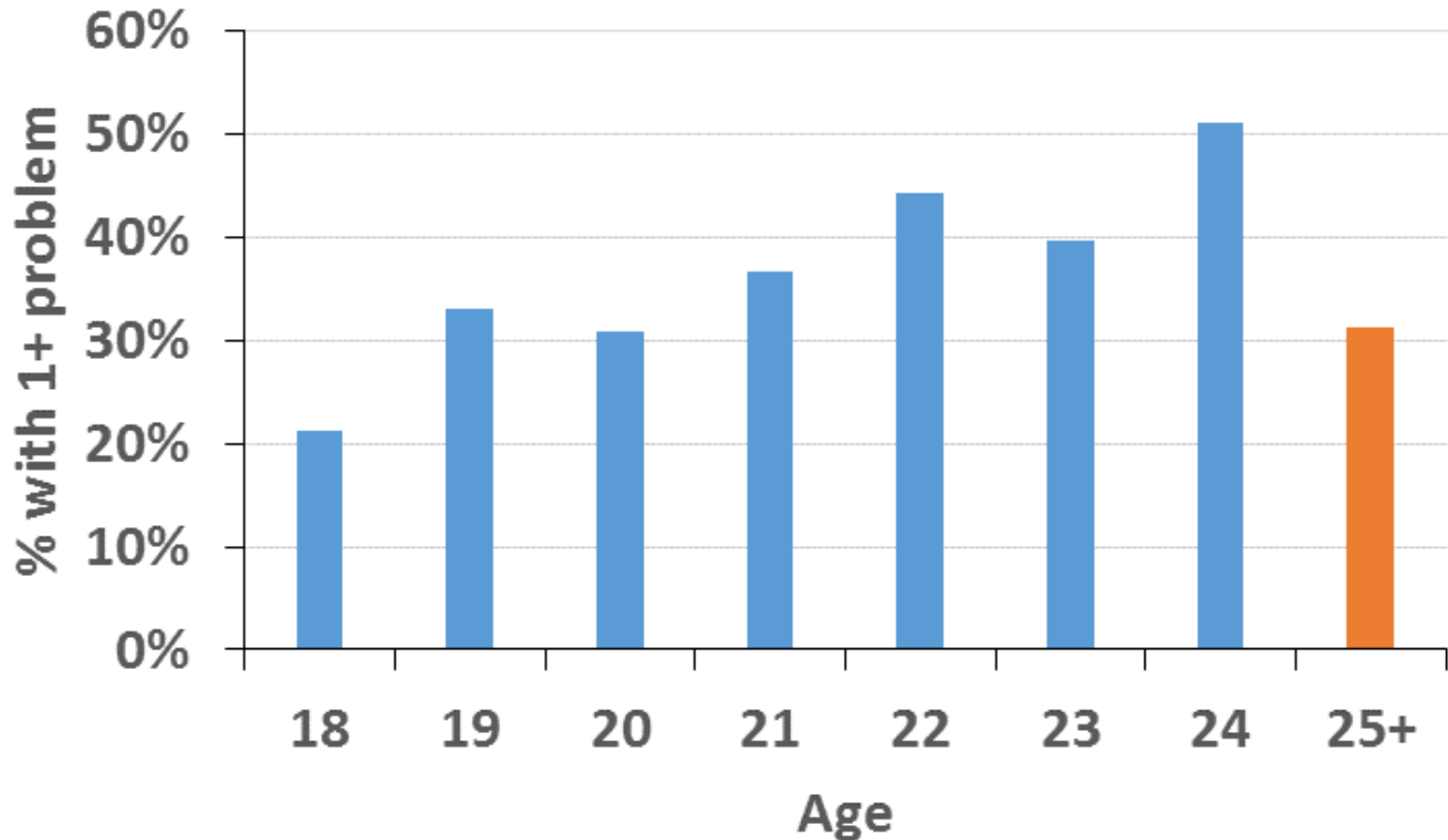


Did you know.....?

- Each year, around 2.5 million young people (16-24) experience complex social welfare legal problems
- Over half of them get no advice

Data sources: 1: E&W Civil & Social Justice Surveys 2004-2012
2: MOJ Legal problem and resolution survey 2014-15

Problem incidence by age



Percentage with one or more legal problem within the 18-24 year old age group and those aged 25 or older (Source: 2014-2015 LPRS).

Legal capability

Just 6% of YP **view their legal problems as legal**

YP have **highest levels** of:

- ‘Legal anxiety’
- Sense of powerlessness to tackle legal issues

Lowest levels of:

- Awareness of rights
- Awareness of services

Mental health & rights



Inter-relationship with legal problems & inequality

- Social welfare legal problems are key determinants of YP's mental health
- YP who are NEET + socially isolated + have SW legal problems = 5 x more likely than gen pop. to experience MH problems

Clients of youth advice services

- Two-thirds meet/exceed common cut-off points for mental illness (GHQ-12)

Mental health (2)

Impact of legal problems

- 45% of youth advice clients report adverse health impact
- 26% visit GP or counsellor as a result

Impact of advice

- 64% of clients report improvements in stress
- Youth advice = a cost-effective intervention on mental health grounds alone

Legal aid cuts

The plan

MOJ originally estimated LASPO would exclude 75,000 C&YP from civil legal aid¹

The reality

In 2014/15 just 3% of 18-24s still eligible for legal aid found their way to a lawyer²

Data sources:

1: *JustRights analysis (2012)*

2: *MOJ Legal problem and resolution survey 2014-15 (2017)*

Systemic issues



Championing advice and counselling

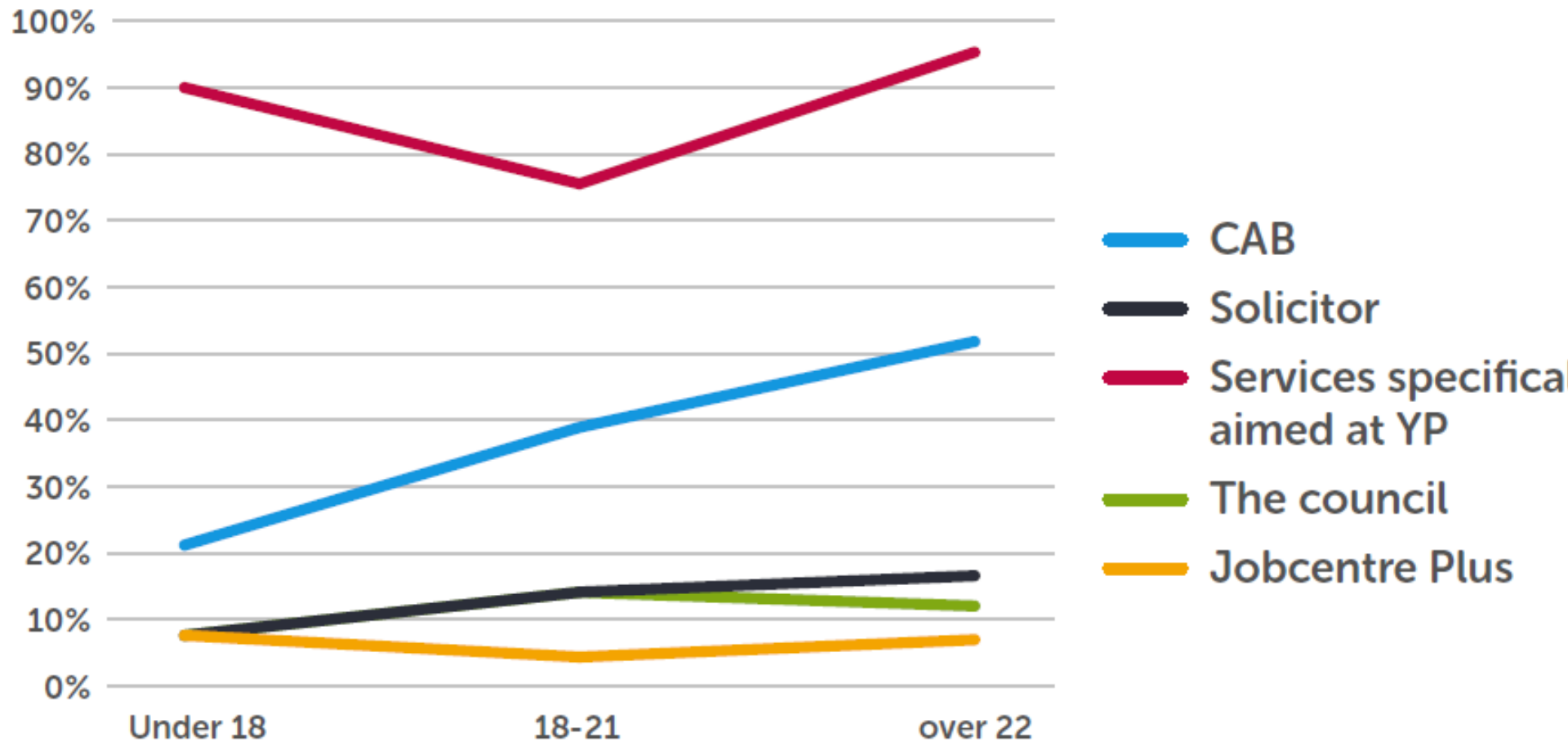
- A culture in society of not respecting YP's rights
- Disconnect between policy-makers/providers and young people
- Unresponsive services

“They don't want us to know our rights. It's a lot less work for them to deal with if we don't know what to ask for.”

Arlind, aged 16

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO SERVICES WITH AGE

% of young people who said they would feel comfortable approaching different advice services



Young People's Manifesto (2015)



MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY

“We have had enough of:

- Not being treated equally because of our age*
- Our rights to housing and benefits being ignored*
- Being taken for a ride by payday loan companies and employers*
- Being fobbed off by stat. services who are meant to be there to protect us*
- Cuts to the services we desperately need”*

Manifesto demands



MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY

1. Make it easier for us to get the correct information
2. Make independent **advice services just for young people** available in every local area
3. Give us free access to **solicitors** who specialise in working with young people
4. Make **CABs** young person-friendly
5. Tailor services to meet our individual needs
6. Put our interests first – above those of the system

What is MORR hoping to achieve?



MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY

AIM 1:

A community of young people empowered to use their rights as a force for positive change

AIM 2:

A society and system that is increasing its respect for young people and their rights

Vision



MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY

All young people are supported to exercise their rights and responsibilities as a vital part of their active engagement in a democratic society

The youth rights movement starts here.....



**MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY**

“A generation of young people who understand their rights and responsibilities is a generation who are empowered to hold services to account and create social change”

Grace Jeremy, disability and mental health campaigner

MORR Programme



MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY

An innovative, integrated approach to

Public Legal Education

+ Youth Social Action

focussed on disadvantaged 15-25 yr-olds
in community settings

RIGHTS!

**MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY**

MORR's model



RIGHTS - core PLE programme

+

VOICE - a youth-led national campaign network

+

ACTION - local rights-focussed social action projects

=

CHANGE

- YP empowered to engage in civic society as informed, responsible citizens
- Public services more responsive to YP's needs

Early impact – independent evaluation findings



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OUR
RIGHTS
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“The programme had increased young people’s problem-solving skills by empowering them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to handle challenging situations more effectively”

Significant improvements (using standardised measures, pre-post) in YP’s:

- **Wellbeing** (WEMWBS)
- **Empowerment** (Youth Empowerment Scale)
- **Self-efficacy** (General Self-efficacy Scale)



MAKE
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“A good few police officers I’ve either bit their nose or I’ve head-butted them in the past because I’ve not known how to handle situations. Now I know how to handle the situations, I know not to head-butt a police officer or try and bite his nose. Instead, record, write down, ask for a receipt.”

(Young person participating in PLE course)



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“It’s very hard in this crazy maze of a head, I have to find like you know where the confidence comes from, the motivation and such, and the self-belief as well.... Some of this isn’t right, some of this needs to change, and I now wanna change myself, I wanna better myself....It’s actually provided me a route through that maze”

(Young person participating in PLE course)

**MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY**

OUR MINDS

OUR FUTURE

The first flagship national campaign of the Make Our Rights Reality programme

Why?

**MAKE
OUR
RIGHTS
REALITY**

- YP are fed up of being ignored, downtrodden and discriminated against
- Mental health system is a prime example

'I have sleepless nights': the looming mental health crisis facing generation rent

GPs telling children to exaggerate mental health symptoms if they want NHS treatment

Mental health plans 'failing a generation', say MPs

Some children reach brink of suicide before getting help with mental health, charity warns

An alarming rise in mental-health sectioning in Britain

NHS patients with severe mental illness waiting up to two years for treatment, report finds

A perfect storm



Social & economic struggles, strained/poor quality services
Fed up; Disappointed; Desperate

+

Digital generation, anti-stigma campaigns, media coverage
Outspoken; Connected; Expert

=

Frustrated; Ready for change; Ready for action

Our Minds, Our Future, Our Say



- Young people have had enough of being told they can't get the support or services they need
- They are tired of being spoon-fed solutions that don't work by doctors, politicians, celebrities, elders
- They are experts by experience
- They deserve a seat at the table



Knowledge is Power

If young people know their rights, and how to stand up for them, they'll be more able to win social change

- MORR's RIGHTS training instills key knowledge
- The campaign gives an application
- The network embeds the power & builds a movement

We can build a generation of young people who are equipped to fight for their rights

The Logistics



The team:

A steering group of 10 young people from all over the country who meet regularly to shape the campaign strategy and direction

The demands:

YP need a seat at table with decision makers, to ensure:

- Access to services in their community, when they need them
- Proper funding
- Smooth transitions between child and adult services

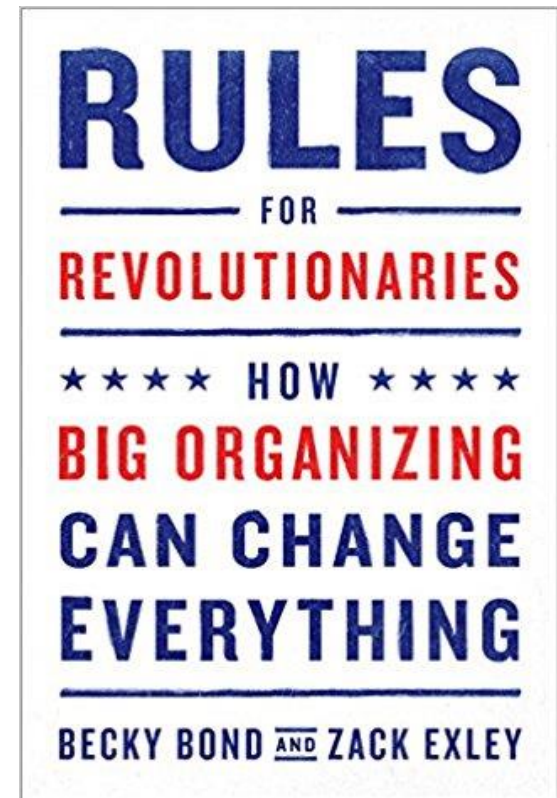


The method

Aim is to build a national movement with local targets (Councils & CCGs)

- Local “Rights Advocates” trained in areas all over the country to lead campaign
- Distributed organising / Big Organising
 - Use of digital tools for remote organising/network building/training
 - Safeguarding questions

MAKE
OUR
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What now?

- First round of training
- Ongoing support, training, network building
- Think fundraising for local projects & ongoing campaign
- Cross our fingers!
- Round 2



Help us!



Share and spread the word

- Follow & Share: Make Our Rights Realty, @MORR_RIGHTS



- Invite young people to sign up for the next cohort

Help us out

- Could you support with producing resources and training?
- Could you train some Rights Advocates?

Supporting the youth rights movement



MAKE
OUR
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*What can professionals do to support
young people?*

How can we work together?

**Thanks for listening –
please get in touch**



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