



PEAR: Young People's Public Health Reference Group – Information for Researchers



**Are you doing research on young people and public health?
Would you be interested in working with a group of young people who could inform your work?**

The National Children's Bureau, with support from the Public Health Research Consortium and INVOLVE, have been funded by the Wellcome Trust to set up two young people's groups (in London and in Leeds) which aim to support children and young people to contribute to the UK public health agenda. Further information on the groups is on the next page. We are interested in working with researchers or organisations who are involved in public health research and policy about or with young people.

If you are doing research on public health issues about, or of interest to young people, then you may be able to work with one or both groups on a one-off or on-going basis. The group's input could include involvement at different stages of the research process, such as:

- Setting research priorities – for a programme or specific project
- The development of new research – eg commenting on ideas, research questions or proposals
- Design – eg informing the development of methodologies and data collection tools
- Data collection – eg piloting data collection tools
- Analysis – eg input into the synthesis of data and identification of themes and issues
- Reporting – eg dissemination of key research findings through the group's website: <http://www.ncb.org.uk/pear/home.aspx>, or production of a young people's version of research findings, such as this one produced by the pilot group: http://www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_9848kw_2377420577445y20e_20077243042m).

The above list is by no means exhaustive, and NCB can provide advice, ideas and support with engaging young people in your research. A small fee covers some of the running costs of the group, but includes help with planning and preparing materials, and we can co-facilitate or lead any sessions with the group on your research.

If your involvement with the group will be a one-off you will need to build in time to update or feedback to the group on outcomes of their involvement.

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What is the PEAR group?

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) ran a small project in London from 2005-2007, with support from the Public Health Research Consortium (PHRC) and INVOLVE, to explore how young people could be involved in public health research. A report on the group is available from the PHRC website:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/phrc/YPPHRG.html>, and the group's own website is:

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/pear/home.aspx>

The pilot group felt that, although there is a lot of research into issues around young people and public health, young people often do not have a say in this research and how it should be done. They are also rarely told about research findings which may be of interest to them. NCB have therefore been funded by the Wellcome Trust to set up two young people's groups, one in London and one in Leeds, which had their first meetings in October 2008. They will run until Autumn 2010. Each group of 12 young people, aged between 12 and 17, will be meeting three-four times a year during school holidays, with an annual residential event where the groups will get together.

What do the groups do?

The groups are receiving training in research skills and public health. They will then be involved in a range of activity – including:

- working with public health researchers on a range of projects
- disseminating information on public health research to other young people (through summaries and a website which the group members are developing)
- helping to organise a conference in Autumn 2010 for researchers and young people interested in public health
- doing and commissioning their own research projects.

Their views and opinions will help to influence the Public Health Research Consortium (PHRC), NICE and other researchers in the field. The project is also developing practice in involving young people in research, and training young researchers.

For further information, or to discuss opportunities to work with the group, please contact:

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For further information on NCB, please go to our website: www.ncb.org.uk