

Understanding the lives of disadvantaged young people

Debrief

March 2014

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There is a huge amount of research in which disadvantaged young people are **boiled down** to little more than **statistics** about low levels of education, homelessness, crime and a range of anti-social behaviours

But this does **not reflect the lives of all** disadvantaged young people or tell even **half of the story**

This research seeks to tell the **stories** of some of these young people – their **lifestyle**, attitudes, **motivations** and aspirations, **in their words**

How do they spend their **time and money?** Who do they look up to?
..... And everything else in-between

What we did

Desk Research

Desk-based research & literature review

Mentor Interviews x6

Depth interviews with Youth mentors

- Mixed Gender
- 2 x Youth Workers
- 2 x Teachers
- 2 x Counsellors/Coaches
- Split between England and Wales

Auto-Ethnographies x18

Self-reported interviews, video & photo capture

- 9 Male; 9 Female
- 6 x 14-15, 6 x 16-19, 6 x 20-25
- 6 x Manchester
- 6 x London
- 6 x Cardiff
- Ethnic mix

Ethnographies x12

2 hour community visits

- 6 Male, 6 Female
- 4 x 14-15, 4 x 16-19, 4 x 20-25
- 4 x Manchester
- 4 x London
- 4 x Cardiff

We recruited most of our youth sample via the mentors we interviewed. As such, most young people we spoke to had in some way had contact with a youth mentor – this meant that many were able to reflect on their lives both pre and post receiving this kind of support

Headlines (1)

- Young people from disadvantaged communities feel that **they are the same as any other young person in the UK** and their sense of identity is very much tied up in maintaining their role as part of this social group
 - As such, **they are part of a “brand me” generation** where the brands they wear, how they present themselves on social media and the celebrities they idolise are integral to their identity

- While they are subject to much the same influences that inform the attitudes and behaviour of any young people , **some key drivers are dialled up as a result of social and financial instability** and a desire to avoid being branded as ‘disadvantaged’; these are borne out in the way they express what is most important to them
 - **“I’ve got swag”** : Owning the ‘coolest’ brands is of huge importance to avoid being branded a ‘tramp’ by peers
 - **“I need to fit in”** : Everyone wants to feel as though they belong; **mobile connectivity and social media are key** to staying in the social loop
 - **“Live for today”**: An ‘earn and burn’ **mindset is common**, with many living beyond their means to keep up; lending and borrowing among friends is common

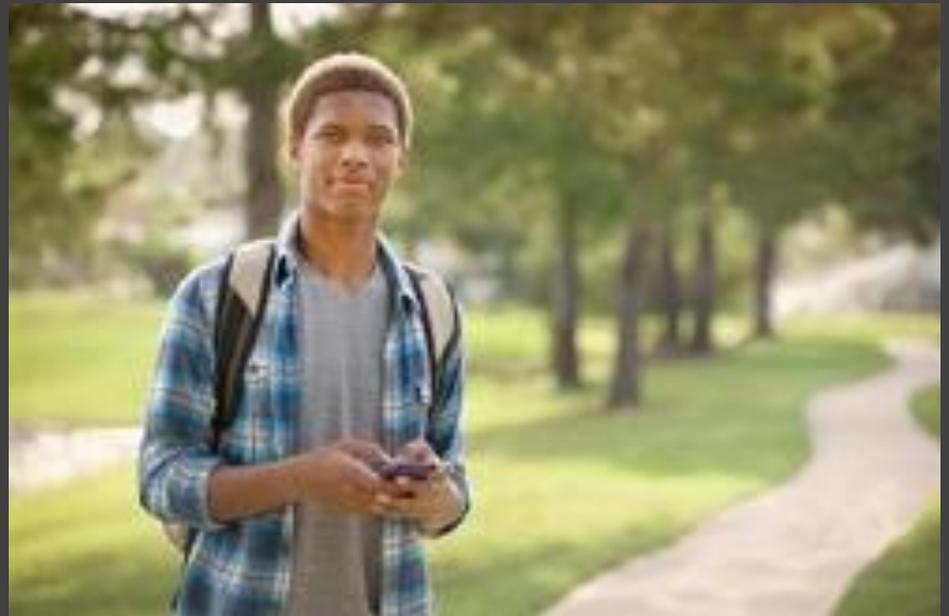
Headlines (2)

- What differentiates disadvantaged young people from their peers is the fact that **their world is often limited** by numerous aspects of everyday life; this has led to a normalisation of...
 - **Financial instability** – ability to spend is sporadic and uncertain; debt is normalised at a young age
 - **Anti-social behaviour** – gangs, violence, drugs are all common-place and there is pressure to be involved
 - **Mental health issues** – depression and anger issues are common and often related to familial, environmental and financial instability
- This normalisation often means that **younger teens have very little awareness that their situation is much different from any other UK teen**
- Aspirations are generally high but due to their ‘limited world’, **knowledge of the pathways through education and employment to realise these ambitions can be limited** and there is often low awareness that they are already veering away from positive steps towards them
 - **Signs of achievement are demonstrated by ‘what you own’** and are the most powerful indicator of perceived social mobility

“I’m like any other teenager”

Young people from disadvantaged communities feel that they are the same as any other young person in the UK and their sense of identity is very much tied up in being part of this social group

This is reflected in their hopes and aspirations, the celebrities they see as role models and the brands they like



<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/mixed-race-teenager-text-messaging-on-cell-phone-royalty-free-image/138709315>

<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/teentech-high-res-stock-photography/153179203>



All young people in the UK are **living in a consumer society** where **celebrities, media and brands influence their identity**



<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/teenage-boys-looking-at-training-shoes-in-high-res-stock-photography/200429378-001>

Part of the “Brand Me” generation; young people are under pressure to form identities at a very young age

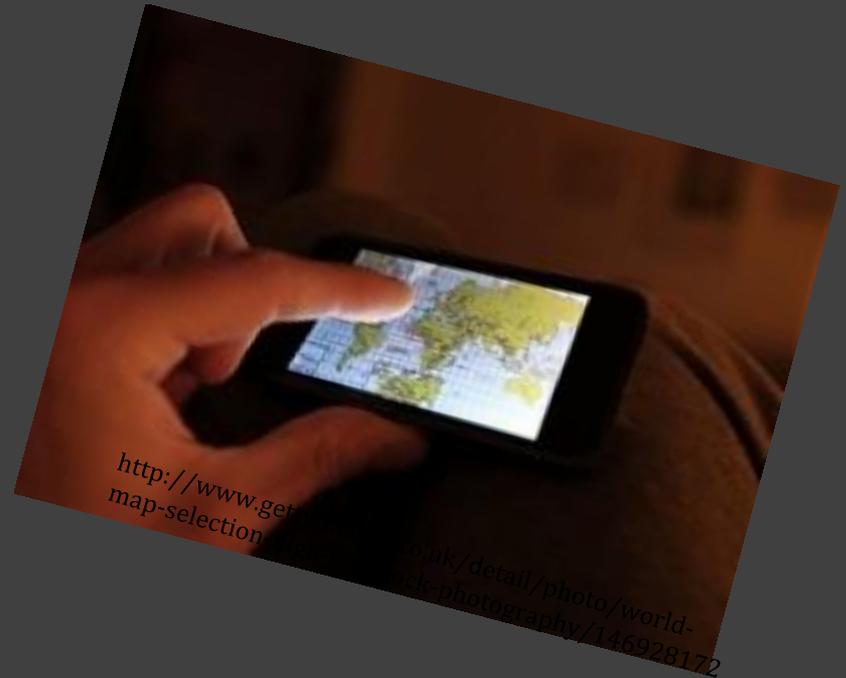
- Peer pressured to formulate an identity that expresses who they are and want to be at a very young age and to present this identity online
 - Early experimentation with self expression can leave a potentially damaging digital footprint
- Social labels influence identity and have lasting effects, particularly for disadvantaged young people
 - They may be more likely to take up behaviour, brands and activities that help them relate to certain peer groups or to solidify their identity



“I don’t realise how small my world is”

What differentiates disadvantaged young people from their peers is the fact that their world is often limited by numerous aspects of everyday life; this can lead to normalisation of...

- Financial instability
- Anti-social behaviour
- Mental health issues



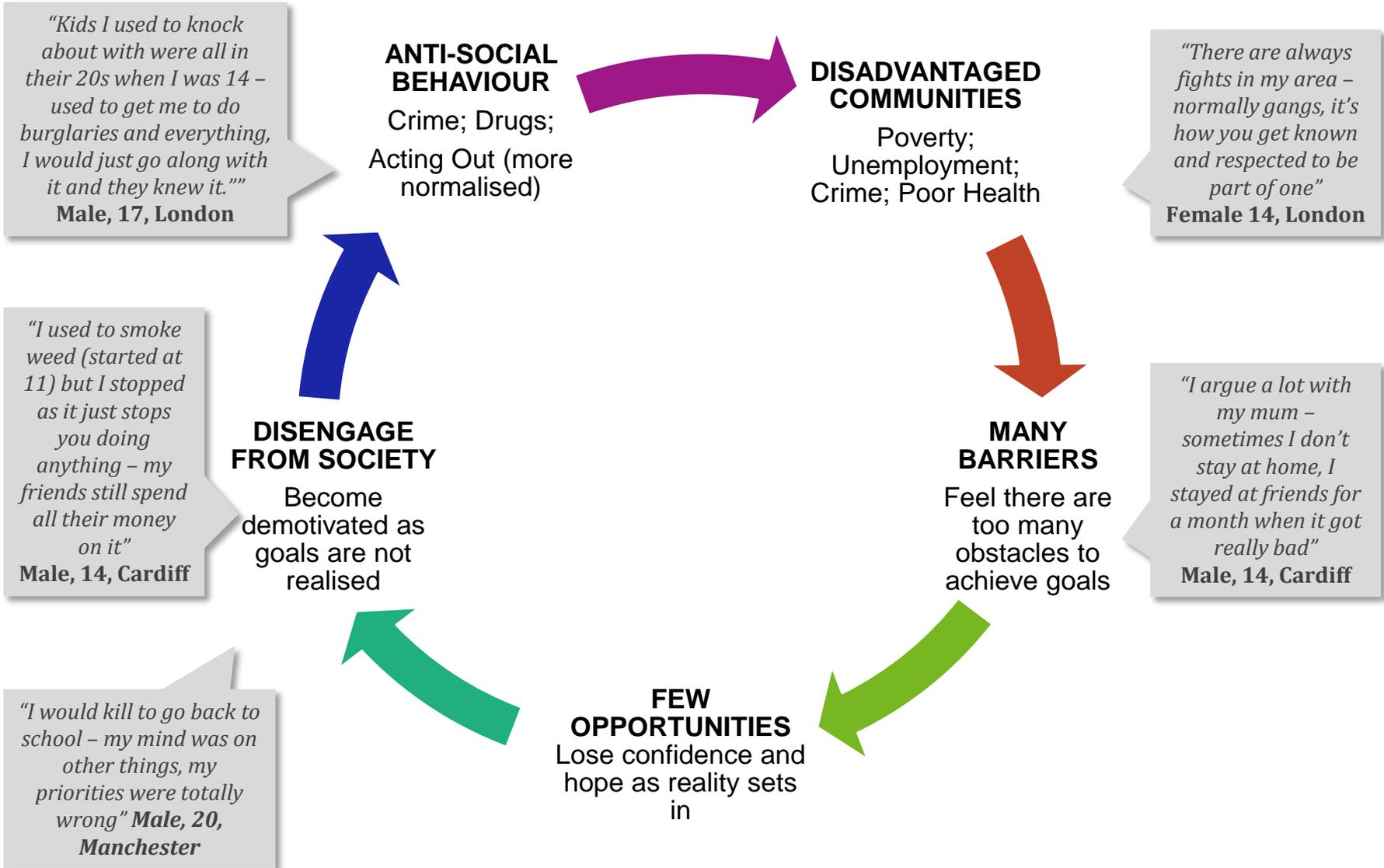
“My auntie lives in the next street and my cousins just down the road – I see my family all the time”
Male, 20, London

These young people’s horizons are even limited on a geographical level with little need for travel outside their immediate locale



“If I go to another area even down the road and they hear I’m from Sale, I’ll get beaten up”
Male, 23, Manchester

Trapped in a limited world, this becomes the norm



There is some evidence that depression and emotional instability is common

- A number of the young people we spoke to had experienced depression
 - This was brought on by a variety of social factors including being kicked out of home/school and bullying
 - Feelings of isolation and not knowing who to trust compounded low feelings
- For boys, this was regularly shown in anger issues
- Cannabis/weed was commonly used; some talked about it making them feel lethargic or paranoid



<http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/self-portrait-high-res-stock-photography/119337261>

“I got frustrated at work the other day as a kid was insulting my family so I punched the wall and now my hand’s really swollen and has to be bandaged up”

Male, 16, Cardiff

According to a study by University of Derby 50% of disadvantaged young people in the UK feel that they are held back by substance abuse in some form

A third of young people not in education, employment or training have suffered from depression and 15 per cent have a mental health problem, according to a report published by the University and College Union.
YOUNG MINDS – July 2013

Youth mentors play an important role in spotting signs

- Access to mental health support came mainly via youth centres/ organisations/ mentors/ counsellors
 - In some cases youth mentors had referred the young people on to GP services
- The youth mentors we spoke to said that ‘self harm’ in all its multiple forms seemed to be on the increase whether this be physical, alcohol, drugs, emotional or even sexual self harm
- They also said that sexual health continues to be an area of concern
 - Young people feel pressured to have sexual relationships at younger and younger ages
 - Some expressed great concern about a rise in child sexual exploitation



<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/msuextension/images/1106331763.jpg>

“I’m doing home schooling now for college because of my mental health issues – it was the youth worker I met that helped me get to the Dr and now I have a psychologist I see every week”

Female, 16, Manchester

Anti-social behaviour is normalised and hard to reject

- Young people are surrounded by anti-social behaviour and this becomes the norm
 - This includes; vandalism, gangs, shop-lifting, violence, drug-taking and speeding
- Not getting involved in anti-social behaviour requires young people to go against the tide which can be difficult
 - Not least because they feel stereotyped as 'bad' and therefore it is what is expected of them
- 'NEET' is a term widely used in media and policy circles. There is some concern from youth mentors we spoke to that labels applied to young people can further lead to a sense of stigma and rejection by society at large.



<http://brightonlite.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/anti.jpg>

"I've been stopped by the Police so many times but I've never been charged with anything- even just because I was running to my girlfriends house. We all get tarred by the same brush because of how we look"
Male, 23, Manchester

Youth organisations are vital in showing young people the possibilities for more positive behaviour

- Participating in a youth centre, church group or sports group seems to be the catalyst for more positive behaviour
 - Youth mentors/coaches play a crucial role as role models
 - Without this support they can feel very much 'on their own' if not getting involved in gangs/drugs etc and become socially isolated
 - Most find out about youth services 'by chance' by being taken along to groups by friends or in one case a flyer from a teacher

"My pastor is my role model, he keeps me on the straight and narrow" female 14, London

"Taking up boxing last year – changed my life, helped me lose weight so I stopped getting bullied and gave me the discipline to control my anger and choose the right path" Male 16, Manchester

'Everyone lets me down'

Young people believe there are **significant gaps** in the basic services they need in their local community. They realise **anti-social behaviour** holds them back, but they need tailored support to help them

- **Lack of support:** Insufficient services in their local community to deal with drugs, alcohol and substance misuse
- **Nothing to do:** Not enough activities for young people in their community

“I need to keep up”

Frequent social and financial instability in their lives and not wanting to be branded a ‘disadvantaged youth’ **amplifies** the importance of things critical to most teenagers.

This particularly relates to having a sense of social status/belonging and following a ‘live for today’ mind-set, as they try to ‘keep up’ with other teens



I've got swag...

I am not a tramp

Chasing the latest trends & making an extra effort to maintain how peers perceive them

Identify with brands to improve 'status'

Defensive against being branded a 'tramp'

I need to fit in...

I want to belong

Connectivity via phone and social media is very important

Vulnerable to being sucked into social groups but question "Who can I really trust?"

Seeking allegiances to call on - what can my friends do for me?

Live for today...

The future can wait

Earn & burn impulse spending - cash comes and goes very quickly

Barriers to future goals make it easier to focus on here and now

Living beyond means to maintain relationships, borrowing from/lending to friends

Every young person cares about these factors but for this audience these things are dialled up as they struggle to keep up

I've got *Swag*...

The appearance of being very cool, smooth, looking good, dressing nice and often having lots of money to flash which draws them the attention of others. A way of carrying yourself like a star.



What it means to have 'swag' and why it's so important

- Disadvantaged young people will go out of their way to avoid being seen as poor
 - If this means getting into debt to be 'swag', then so be it

- Materialism is rewarded by social capital; brands are at the core of their identity
 - Success is often measured in terms of 'what you have' rather than 'how you get there'

A study by Unicef in 2011 found that parents in the UK said they felt "tremendous pressure from society to buy material goods for their children" This pressure was felt most acutely in low-income homes

theguardian

News | Sport | Comment | Culture | Business | Money | Life & style

News > Society > Children

UK children stuck in 'materialistic trap'

Unicef blames the fact that Britons are working longer hours and as a result parents are buying off children with 'branded goods'

I've got more swag than you

Collapse

I need an iPhone 5

Expand

Wish I could dress in rate nice leggings and baggy tops and hats and look half decent with swaggy trainers ☐

Expand

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite ⋮ More

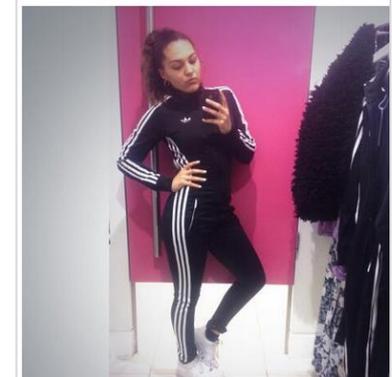
"Not everything I'm wearing is a brand but as long as I have one thing like my Nike trainers then it's ok" Male 16, Cardiff



Picked up my Adidas originals x topshop all in one today ☐
pic.twitter.com/leuzPv52nz

📍 Hide photo

← Reply ↻ Retweet



Hierarchy of brands

“Guys get Gucci belts to show they have money – I can’t afford that so it’s a bit rubbish” Male 14, Cardiff



Aspirational

GUCCI



TOPMAN

Special

oasis



ZARA

TOPSHOP

“All my trainers are Nike or Adidas – you don’t want to be labelled a tramp if you’re wearing FILA’s” Male 16, Cardiff



Regular



NEW LOOK

PRIMARK



“Everyone knows JD does the best trainers.” Female 15, London

- **Self-expression** is often facilitated through **fashion brands**
- The more **desirable** the brand, the more **‘swag’** you have
- **Some brands can lead to being branded a ‘tramp’** eg FILA – a brand that is linked with having no money or swag

Brands are used to maintain status within peer groups

Idols have swag; role models offer inspiration

- Young people have a range of **idols** with the majority being celebrities
 - Many young people **desire fame / money** and are **influenced** by **celebrities**, especially artists they listen to
 - Celebrities provide **aspiration** to be 'swagger'
 - Celebrity idols are often **matched to gender**, with males being influenced by the likes of Eminem and Jay Z and females by Rihanna, Beyoncé etc

“Meek Mill has worked his way up from nothing and now he has a gold chain around his neck”
Male 17, London



“My youth mentor is my role model because of what he stands for, how he helps kids no matter what, his passion and perseverance” Male 14, Manchester

- **Role models** tend to be **closer to home**, where young people look up to others that **inspire** them, such as friends, older siblings, youth mentors, coaches and pastors
 - Role models are those that provide **support** and **guidance** for these young people
 - Role models are **people they feel they can trust**

When asked about their role models, celebrities are the ‘knee-jerk’ first response. But ask them who inspires them and they will talk about people much closer to home

I need to fit in....



What does it mean to fit in and why is it important?

- Being a part of a **social group** is one of the **most important things to young people** in general, and is **heightened** for those disadvantaged youth whose home lives and finances sometimes lack stability
- **Belonging** stems from **commonalities** between friends, such as taste in **music, clothes, hobbies** and **religion** – as soon as these are identified, young people will **focus on their friendships**, even if this leads to **living beyond their means**

An article on Beautiful Brains in National Geographic, Oct 2011, supports our findings:

Brain-scan studies suggest that teenage brains react to peer exclusion much as they respond to threats to physical health or food supply. At a neural level, in other words, teenagers perceive social rejection as a threat to existence.

J.D. Love @NeverTurnBlack7 · 5h
I just want to fit in
Expand

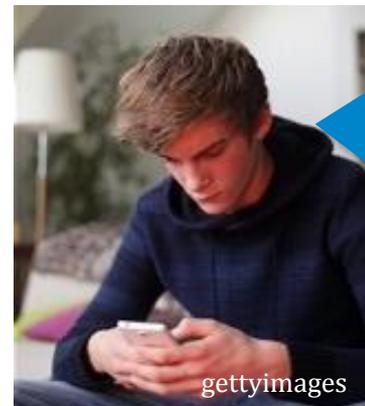
Every-day revolves around maintaining relationships

“On a school day I get up at 7am, listen to music with my sister, go to school, hang out with my friends at lunch and we walk home together. When I get home I have coursework and spend time with my family. I’m on my phone a lot too, chatting on BBM - I used mine so much that it broke...” 14, London



“In the week I go to college and after I will go straight to the gym to box, I need to box to control my anger, it really helps. I argue a lot with my mum so I don’t go home much, I stay with friends instead” 16, Cardiff

“On a Saturday I go to church in the morning as I’m team leader, then I’ll meet my friends in town, we will go to KFC and maybe look in some shops - I take lots of pictures and put them on Instagram - especially if I like what I’m wearing.” 16, Cardiff



“I spend pretty much every Saturday with my friends, we eat at Subway, hang out at the park - people are on their phones a lot, checking their Facebook and stuff . I look at my phone as soon as my eyes open - it helps me wake up to see what everyone’s up to” 17, London

Trust vs Social allegiances

- These young people can find it **very hard to trust** people, especially if they have **been let down before**
- They have a **need to belong** and will **create social allegiances** where **trust isn't necessarily part of the equation.**

SOCIAL ALLEGIANCES

Some find it **hard to trust**, but at the same time **want social allegiances**

This means they're **easily sucked into things** and end up joining **gangs** or similar

Instead of relationships based on trust, it's more about '*What can these friends do for me?*' and '*What will they need from me?*'

WHO THEY TRUST

Only have a **handful** of people they can **trust**

Trusting someone is **not permanent**, therefore who they **trust** is **ever-changing**

They feel they can be the **most honest** with their **close friends** and therefore prefer to confide/trust in them over family and youth workers.

"My youth worker puts in extra and meets me on my level, he has good banter and he doesn't judge, so yeah I can trust him 100%"
Male16, Manchester

"Sometimes me and my dad are like best friends and then we won't speak for ages – it's up and down"
Male, 17, London

Youth workers: Connect better than professionals or teachers – trust is built on the passion youth workers put in to support on their level (on the street)

Close friends: Trustworthy friends will listen and give personal advice (but not always factual)

Family: Parents and siblings can be hard to trust when home life is complex, but if trust is in tact, young people will confide and feel supported

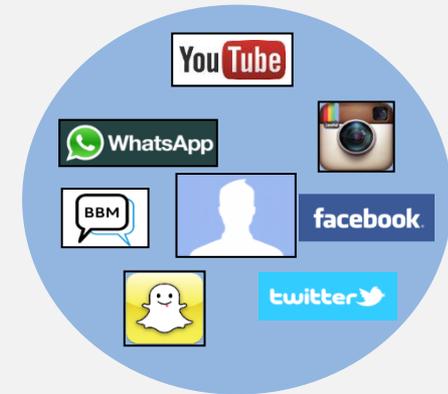
Connectivity & social media

- All the young people we spoke to had smart phones
 - with iPhones the most sought after
 - The aim is to get onto a contract so they can get a better smart phone that is paid off over time
 - Phones are regularly lost or broken
 - Use of social media apps is primary use
 - BBM is very popular (now also available on iPhone), WhatsApp and Instagram also key



“I would feel empty, like my life is useless if I didn't have my phone.”
Female 16, London

- If you are not on social media ‘you are out of the loop’
- Creating ‘brand me’ is at the centre of social media use, however young people are also using it to seek social validation/support



A ‘constellation of self’:

Young people express themselves differently on different platforms and to different audiences; *choosing the right social network to express how they are feeling to the right audience*

Youth mentors say that body image issues can stem from social media use. In particular, Instagram where young people can find a host of ‘thinspiration’ and fitness profiles to follow.

Leisure activities

- Social groups (mixed boys & girls) will meet in town centres or parks to 'hang out' and walk the streets together as they rarely have much money to spend

Fast food - Hours are spent socialising in fast food restaurants such as McDonalds, KFC, Subway & Burger King

- Many of these restaurants have free Wi-Fi, enabling young people to connect via social media and share their experiences online

Shopping

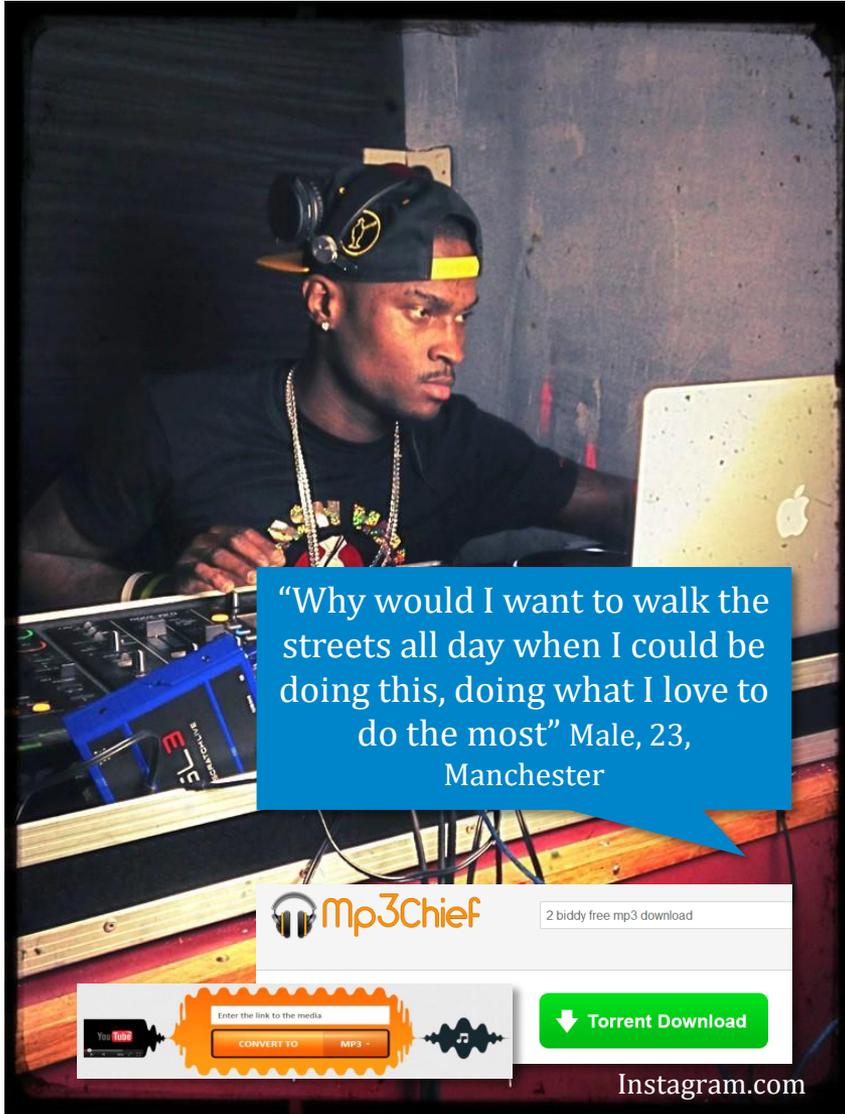
- Girls will regularly go and look in shops together – not necessarily to buy

“We like to go to shopping centres to hang out and look in shops”
Female, 14, London

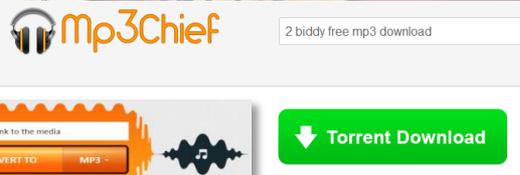
Music - Listening to music, going to gigs and promoting own / friends music is an important part of many social groups.

“I’m part of the ministry for life music scene – we put on a rapping event last week”
Male, 18, Cardiff

Music



“Why would I want to walk the streets all day when I could be doing this, doing what I love to do the most” Male, 23, Manchester



Instagram.com

- Being into the **same music** as your **friends** creates a sense of **belonging** and **fitting into a community** eg Afrobeats, HipHop, Rap
- Music is **downloaded for free** via services like **YouTube converter & 2biddy (both illegal)** – this **enables** them to **express themselves** by **sharing** music with their friends, **encouraging** each other to download songs they have **found / recommend**
- For some young people, **music** is a **passion**. **creating** and **uploading** music to **share** with their **peers** is a **true form of self expression**, it provides **focus** and an **outlet** for **emotions / life experiences**

“I’m really into AfroBeats- it’s like African music- it’s the best and that’s what all my friends listen to.” Female, 16 London

For boys, physical activity is a big part of forming relationships and maintaining reputation

"I'm obsessed with the gym, I love the feeling of pumping weights to blow off steam, I feel so good afterwards"
Male, 20, Manchester

Boys are most drawn to **competitive sports** like Football, Basketball & Fighting (eg boxing / kickboxing)

Fighting activities such as **watching cage fighting**, participating in **boxing** and **kickboxing** are **very popular** – some of which can have a **positive impact on self-discipline and anger-management**

Maintaining **body image** and **reputation** is very important, so they will go to the **gym** to **'bulk up'** – *sometimes obsessively*

Boys will play sport to **create** and **sustain** bonds with **each other** and **family members**

Key motivator for boys is perceived value and outcome
-what's in it for me?

"Taking up boxing last year changed my life, helped me lose weight so I stopped getting bullied. It gave me the discipline to control my anger and choose the right path" Male, 16, Manchester

"I really like fighting, It feels good after you dominate someone, I just like the feeling of being top-dog" Male, 20, Manchester

"I enjoy cycling, so does my dad, we can do it together – it's also easier to get around this way"
Male, 17, London

However, girls can feel self-conscious about participating in physical activity, especially if their friends aren't involved

Sport is **not a big part** of their lives

Many feel they have '**missed the boat**' if they were not *sporty* early on in school and **fear being embarrassed**

Dance isn't always seen as a **physical activity** but it is **often enjoyed**

Key motivator for girls is if their friends do it

"I want to play sport but I'm shy. I'd only do it if my friends did it first."
Female 16, London

"All the activities I do are organised through school- it's just cheaper and easier that way."
Female 15, London

Live for today....

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YOU

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ONLY

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LIVE

O

ONCE

What living for today means and why it's important

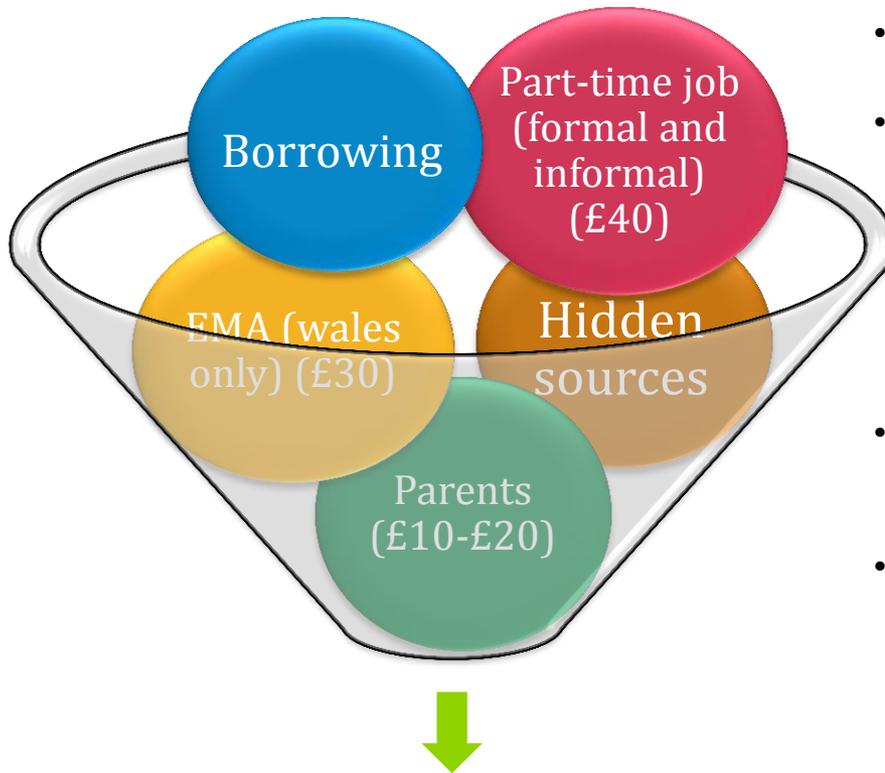
- A 'living for today' attitude is most powerful in young peoples approach to money, this is brought on by a number of factors:
 - Young people see parents living hand to mouth and regularly in debt and this is seen as normal
 - Lack of a clear route to goals means that 'enjoying today' is most salient
 - Importance of 'having swag' and socialising encourages young people to live beyond their means
- **An 'Earn and Burn' mentality is the norm**

This 'live for today' mind-set has been proven to be caused by living in poverty

Living with too little imposes huge psychic costs, reducing peoples mental bandwidth and distorts decision-making in ways that digs them deeper into a bad situation i.e. the tunnel vision of 'live for today'

'Scarcity' 2013 S. Mullainathan, E. Shafir

The weekly earn



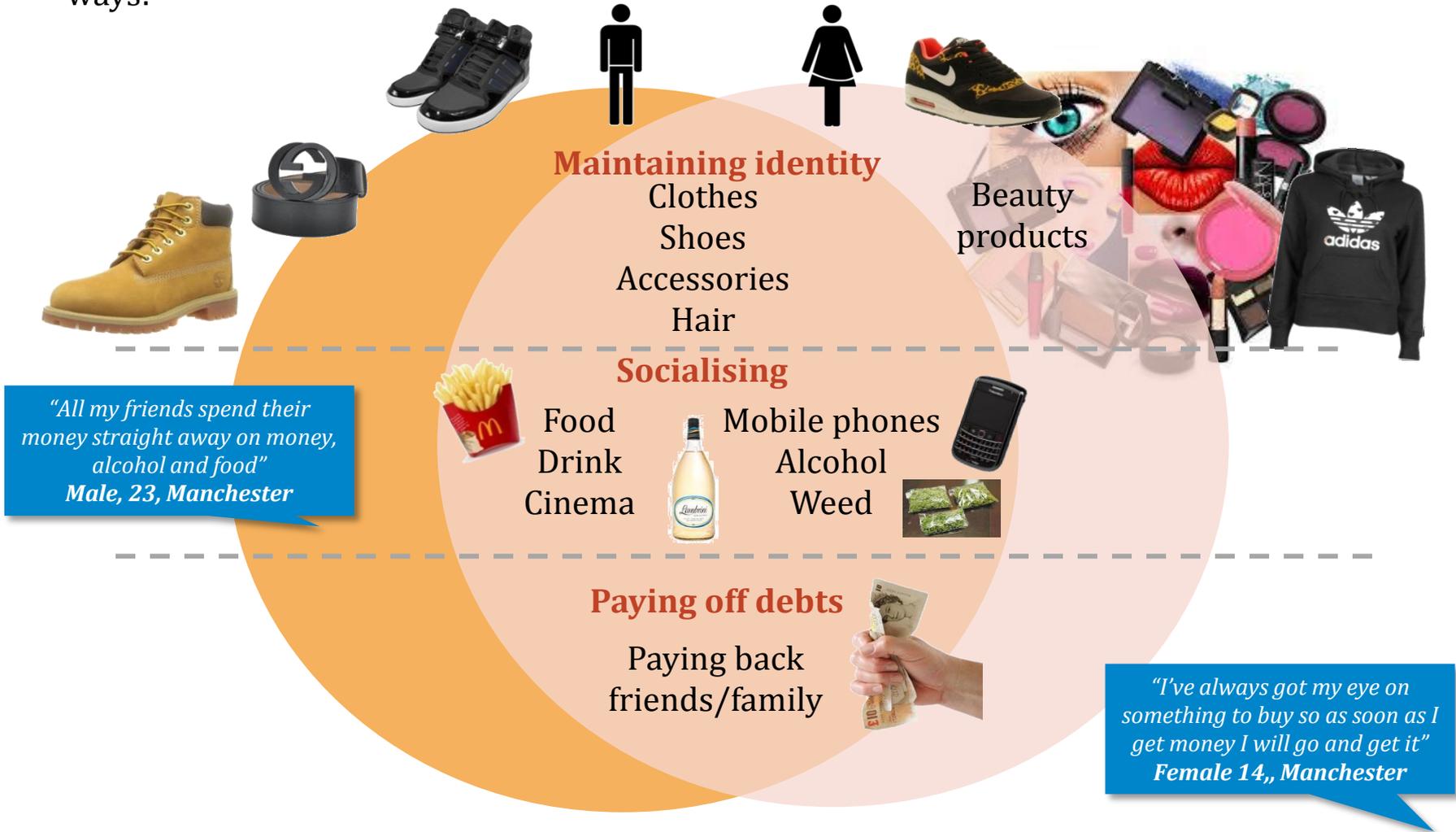
EARNINGS

- Sources of money **vary** and are **irregular**
- Money from **parent(s) is most common**
 - According to a study by Mintel low-income families tend to give more for pocket money than the middle-class
 - Money from parents **reduces / diminishes as they reach early adulthood**
- Part-time jobs – **formal** and **informal**, such as cleaner, fruit and veg stall, **'odd jobs'**
- **Borrowing** and **lending** to/from friends is a major part of weekly finances as income is so irregular and **living beyond means is the norm**
 - This can be in the form of **cash** or **'favours'** e.g. buying a MacDonald's meal
- There are also **hidden sources of income** that some are unwilling to disclose eg drug dealing / re-selling goods for a profit

"I buy football cards in the Lidl and then sell them in school – I make enough money to buy sweets and stuff"
Male 14, Manchester

The weekly burn

- These young people earn and burn; as soon as they get money, they spend it in a number of ways:



Debt is normalised at a young age and is the gateway for more serious money issues when older

- Worrying about not having enough money is common but:
 - Being in debt to friends is a normal state of affairs as young people seek to live beyond their means
 - Managing money and the concept of 'saving' feels impossible to young people and they are not even sure how to start
 - Access to credit cards from the age of 18 is the point when young people start to get into serious debt

Personal debt has **escalated** and become a **social norm**. Statistics show that:

- 90% of young people are now in debt by the age 21 yrs
- 46% of 18-24 year olds owed £2000+ and 1 in five of them owed £10,000 (Balzagette 2010: 18).

“I know where I want to go... but how do I get there?”

Aspirations are generally high but knowledge of the pathways through education and employment to realise these ambitions is limited

‘Signs of achievement’ (i.e. money), become their primary focus and a powerful indicator of social mobility, as they lack understanding of the vital steps to take to reach career goals



<http://cache3.asset-cache.net/gc/90881101-hatfield-house-maze-gettyimages.jpg?>

They have aspirations for the future, but naivety over how they'll get there

- Most are clear on their aspirations for the future which generally involve professional jobs such as: vet, banker, entrepreneur
- There is optimism that aspirations are achievable but little direction as to how they will achieve their goal
 - Unclear on the steps that will need to be taken – education, work-experience etc, general understanding that education is important but many regularly 'skip school'
 - A 'live for today' attitude pervades, *'I'll work out how I'm going to get there – down the line'*
- For those over 20 years old, optimism lessens as reality sets in and goals are not realized

Our findings are supported by JRF study, Oct 2011, which showed that:

- There is belief among policy makers that raising aspirations will increase educational achievement. However this study showed that generally aspirations are high amongst disadvantaged youths but knowledge of the pathways through education and employment to realise these ambitions was limited.
- The authors conclude that policy to increase social mobility needs to go beyond assumptions about certain communities having low aspirations – it needs to tackle barriers to fulfilling them.

"I just cant be bothered to go in to college sometimes but I could end up being excluded if I don't – I'm on my last warning"
Female 16, Cardiff

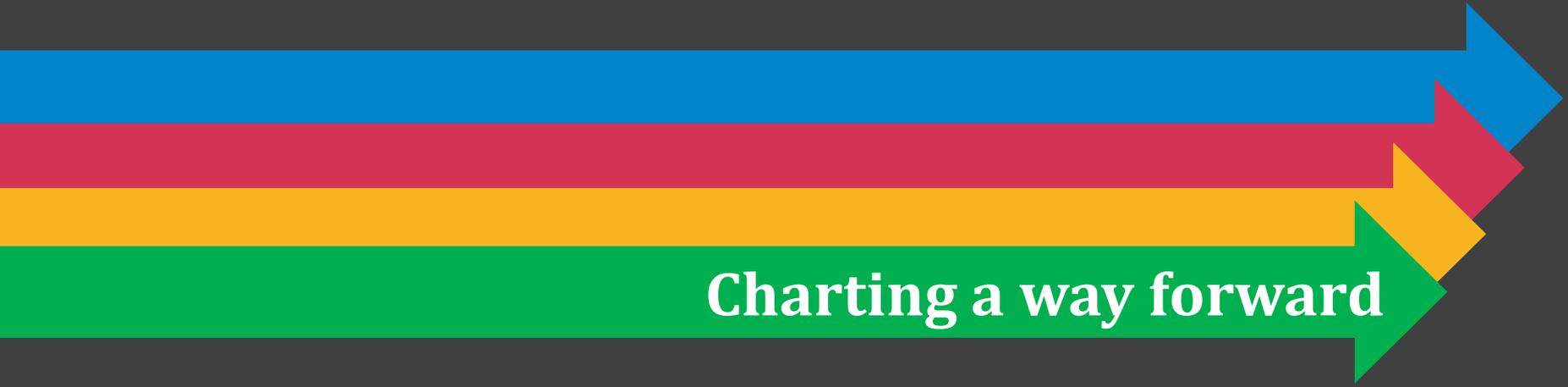
Young people focus on 'what they own' as the biggest indicator of their own form of social mobility

- As they have very limited exposure to those who have achieved similar career goals or those who are progressing towards them, they are unaware of the steps that need to be taken and so ignore this and focus on the 'signs of achievement' i.e. money
 - Visible elements such as the latest phone, following the latest fashion trends are much more powerful and pervasive than focusing on 'how to achieve their career goal'
 - This goes further than just wanting to impress others, there seems to be a deeper held belief that 'If I have the latest stuff' I'm on the way up'

- Younger teens lack real awareness that their 'norm' is that different from most teens
 - But older teens & young adults reflect back more and acknowledge their world as more limited

The UK has some of the lowest social mobility and highest inequality in the developed world





Charting a way forward

Charting a way forward

Opportunities

- Aspirations are high
- When there are positive influences eg youth, church, sports groups this can stop involvement in anti social behaviour
- Physical activity is an important outlet for young men

“Young people need to be around the right people not the wrong people to get their heads straight”
Male, 16, Cardiff

Things to address

- Lack of knowledge on how to reach goals
- Not always aware when veering away from the path to meet their aspirations
- Anti-social behaviour
- Earn and burn mentality
- Mental health issues
- Young women more resistant to getting involved in physical activity

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Every young person has a unique story – this is Anna's*



“I just can't be bothered to go in to college sometimes but I could end up being excluded if I don't – I'm on my last warning”

- 16, lives in Cardiff with parents and brothers
- Studying business studies in college but passion is fashion
- Part of youth group at church – pastor is a role model
- Instagram, facebook, whatapp really important to social life
- In college you are judged by what you wear – your appearance is really important

“It's how you are judged as having swag or not – Nike airs, timberlands show you've got swag”

- She gets money from EMA - £30 a week, which is relied on but never feels like enough
- Spends all her money on food (KFC, Subway), alcohol (Lambrini, Malibu), clothes shopping (always has her eye on something)
- EMA – relied upon, but keeps missing class so doesn't always get it
- Plan is to go to university

*Name changed for anonymity

Every young person has a unique story – this is Ed's*

- 23 years old and lives at home with parents
- Just got a part-time job in his uncle's fruit and veg shop but wants to be a youth mentor or pursue his rap music but can't find a way
- Lives in Manchester, there are lots of gangs and violence, he is not in one but lots of pressure to be:

"It's a respect culture, that's why it matters what gang you're part of"

- He feels stereotyped as a delinquent but turned his life away from weed and petty crime when his cousin went to prison
- It's hard to save money – wants to enjoy today, spending money on alcohol, food, hip-hop clothes
- Mostly eats KFC or MacDonal'd's



"I've been stopped by the Police so many times – even just cause I was running to my girlfriends house. We all get tarred by the same brush"



"If I go to another area even down the road and they hear I'm from Sale, I'll get beaten up"



*Name changed for anonymity