

POWAR

Here to Make a Difference



**P**articipate  
**O**ppportunity  
**W**in  
**A**chieve  
**R**espect

POWAR is the Lancashire council for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. We can share views and opinions about decisions that affect our lives.





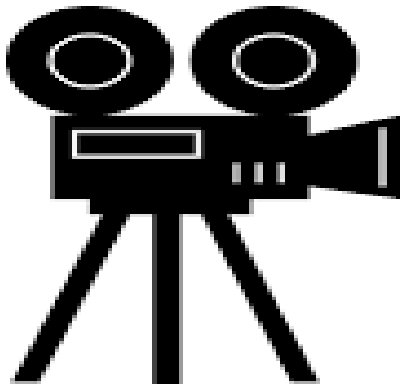
- **We meet monthly to discuss issues that affect us meeting at different venues across Lancashire**
  - **We have specific groups for Media, Young Inspectors and primary sessions**
  - **We take part in Consultations on important topics and get involved in important decisions that have an impact on our lives**
- **We attend SEND collaborative workshops and sit on the SEND Partnership Board working with decision makers**
- **We train staff from lots of different places and take part in recruitment**



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**We like to present our  
opinions in creative  
ways and have been  
involved in many  
different film making  
projects.**



**In one short films we explored stereotyping and produced a film with ITV Fixers.**

**We looked at the impact on young people with disabilities in schools and worked together to produce the film 'We want Change'.**





Our FIXERS film

We Want Change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7IN-YxgiEM>




**Our films have been shown in many place's including at an exhibition in Edinburgh at the Annual Conference for the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children. One of our POWAR members opened the conference and the following is his short film about austerity and how he feels that cuts to services have made him feel that his voice is no longer heard.**

David's Story

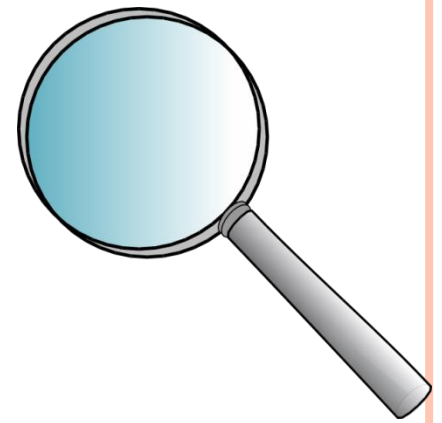




The background of the slide is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping squares in various colors including purple, blue, green, yellow, and orange. Superimposed on this grid are several stylized, semi-transparent hands in various colors (yellow, orange, blue, grey) with fingers spread, appearing to reach upwards from the bottom and sides of the frame.

**We have carried out our own consultations in Lancashire - on the Barnardo's 10 year strategy, Families and Social Act bill and SEND Partnership Board working group to name but a few.**

# Young Inspectors



- We complete a training session to learn how to be a Young Inspector
- More recently young people train each other on the skills needed to be a Young Inspector
- We inspect SEND Services that impact on children and young people with disabilities
- We look at how well these services are supporting children and young people
- We write recommendations and go back 6 - 9 months later to review the changes



# Recommendations

- We have recently inspected Caritas Care who provide day services for children and young people with disabilities
- Our recommendations included:
- The staff could maybe ask for more feedback from the young people so that they are more involved with the activities they do. Look into more/different activities. Look at the ideas identified by the Young People and see if they can be used in the future
- Look into giving the young people life skills training, workshops to train the young people for the outside world



# Primary Age POWAR

- Our primary POWAR group meet 6 weekly
- In our groups we do fun activities and games that help us to share our views and opinions
- One of our members sits on CRAE the Children's Rights Alliance for England
- In October 1 primary member travelled to London with 6 Primary Linx members to take part in the CRAE Change It! Campaign which aims to stop families being placed in unsuitable accommodation.



# Interviewing for Staff

POWAR members are very involved in recruitment and have interviewed:

- Social Workers
- NHS Staff
- Barnardo's Staff
- LCC Staff
- Taken part in speed interviews



# Local and National Boards

- One member of POWAR sits on the MH2K board where they discuss young people's mental health and make recommendations for change
- One member sits on the NSPCC Online Safety Advisory Board
- One member sits on the CAFCASS Family Justice Young People's Board
- 1 member sits on CRAE Children's rights alliance for England
- Two members of POWAR attend Youth Council
- Seven members of POWAR met with Ofsted for the SEND Inspection at LCC
- One member sits on the SEND Partnership Board
- Four members of POWAR attend the Ucan group in partnership with UCLan and have taken part in the Stories 2 Connect project



# UCAN & S2C – Stories to Connect

- Ucan is made up of a group of young people who undertake various research projects including Stories 2 Connect
- Stories 2 Connect was a 2 Year project about gathering people's stories and designing and developing these in a phygital (Physical/Digital)
- These were launched in Preston
- One member travelled to Canada to share the work of Stories to Connect
- Another two travelled to Japan to train young people to be young researchers
- Several members have been involved in Euro child conferences in Geneva and Croatia







# SEND Collaborative Workshops

- Members of POWAR have had their voices heard alongside professionals and parent/carers in Lancashire in a series of workshops called Send Together
- As a result of these workshops Lancashire have now changed their paperwork for requesting assessments and produced guidance for Ehc Plans which means the process is now simpler





# TRAINING EXAMPLE

- Social Work Academy induction, 3 month review and 6 month review – Young people from POWAR have a slot at these training days and deliver participation training on how social workers can include the voice of the child in their work.
- Impact: POWAR members are able to influence social workers from the beginning of their career to ensure that the voice of the child is embedded from the start and to reinforce that message at the reviews.



# EURO CHILD CONFERENCE - CROATIA

Through attending the conference young people have been inspired by other young people and professionals participating in the conference. The POWAR member who was part of the committee had created strong friendships with other members of the committee and as a result of his work has increased in confidence.

There were 3 key themes identified from the conference which will be taken forward:

- Every government in Europe should make teaching about children's right to participate a mandatory part of the curriculum in every school
- Every government in Europe should be obliged to provide evidence of the impact of children in setting the agenda, influencing decisions and following these through
- Every government in Europe should implement an inclusive participation strategy, for ALL children, that obliges local, regional and national decision makers to take children's views into account



# Our Awards

- One member won a Rock FM Time to Shine Award
- 20 LINX and POWAR receive a Diana Award
- POWAR won Celebrate Youth Award in the category of Community Engagement Award
- One member won the Include Me Too award in the category of Child or Young Person of Friendship
- Young Inspectors receive Diana award
- One primary member won Inspiring winner from Youth on Board (British Youth Council Awards)
- Shortlisted for the CYP Now Award





# Barnardo's Excellence Awards

One young person from the POWAR group was nominated for the Young Achiever Award back in October. He was nominated for his consistent campaigning with POWAR and was successful on winning the award for the West Region. The awards took place at Sainsbury's Headquarters in London and was presented his award by Javed Khan CEO Barnardo's and Esther McVey MP



# What we would like to do next

- Young Inspectors – Inspecting a wider range of setting including education settings, health settings and more short breaks setting
- Interviews and Training – Get involved in interviewing and training more staff that work with young people with SEND such as SENDO's
- Commissioning – Get involved in reviewing services that Lancashire commission to work with young people with SEND



# What we would like to see more of

- More varied courses to study and different options such as those with not a lot of coursework
- Shorter Waiting times for health appointments
- More opportunities to volunteer and work
- More support, advice and information when we need it
- More understanding of our needs from professionals
- Teachers coming to your level and getting to know you, not assuming they know your abilities





# What we would like from SEND Services in the future.

(And some thoughts and points for  
discussion)



- Consistency with providers and funding – changing providers or service being removed altogether causes anxiety for young people.
- Easier communication with SEND teams including using technology
- More services post 17 and better communication between children and adult services – passing on information needs improving
- Consistency with providers and funding – changing providers or service being removed altogether causes anxiety for young people.
- EHCP's – process is too long. Young people are having to wait a long time to get into a school which will meet their needs.



- Teachers and other professionals need training on disabilities and special needs and how to help and support us.
- Professionals think we can't understand things but really we just need extra support and time to be able to do things.
- Teachers to use different teaching styles and to use different media such as films, visual aids etc.
- Many young people leave school with limited qualifications so have little choice over the college and type of course they can do. Many of the colleges are a long way from home as the closer colleges do not provide suitable courses. This adds extra time and anxiety onto the young people.



- Some young people have not been asked about or been involved in making a choice about the school or college they are attending or whether they would like to attend mainstream or special school.
- Those young people who have been involved in choosing their school or college are glad they had the choice and feel better for being involved. All young people should be given the chance to express their opinion about the school or college they would like to attend and be able to explain why.
- It would be good to be given choices or chance to vote on topics and aspects which will affect our lives.
- Better support needs to be provided to build up relationships / friendships with other young people.



# Thank you for listening

