BTEG
BLACK TRAINING & ENTERPRISE GROUP

Understanding the support needs of BAME families with vulnerable young boys

Executive Summary Report

Karl Murray

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The **Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)** is supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government through the Tackling Race Inequalities Fund (TRIF) programme, which we hope will be of value to policy makers, practitioners and parents. The interpretations and views expressed in this report are those of BTEG and not necessarily those of our funder

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We therefore thank all those parents, practitioners and colleagues who gave up their time to speak to us. We hope we have done justice to the voices as we move from rhetoric to practice. In the final analysis, the interpretation and understanding reflected in this report, remains that of the author and BTEG.

Key findings

- We found that demands young boys make on their parents differ from those demands made by young girls. Where parents have children of both sexes, they found that the boys were more physically demanding and challenging, they were more aggressive and some parents lacked the confidence and skill to cope with the challenges they encountered.

- The absence of the father was seen as crucial. Where the father was present it made a difference as they shared in the parenting responsibilities but more often than not it was left to the mother to undertake the bulk of the parenting responsibilities.

- It is too early to determine the impact of the ***Think Family Strategy***, especially the 'Family Intervention Projects' (FIPs), on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families. Evidence gained through the case studies indicated that the delivery of the programme was at an early stage and therefore it was difficult to determine the effectiveness of the programmes in place. Engagement with the family was often as a result of the concerns prompted by the child and seen as 'child–problem focused' and not whole family focused intervention in the first instance.

- Single parents found support hardest to obtain. Single parents from Asian backgrounds were particularly concerned about how they are perceived within their community and in some cases, where relationships had broken down (i.e. divorce), they were unwilling to make this known to their families. Other single parents found it difficult to balance work and home life, especially child rearing; preferring in some cases, to give in to the demands of their children.

- Mental health considerations were an issue for some parents, with cause and effect hotly contested. African-Caribbeans were concerned about the number of young people identified with schizophrenia, while Asian parents were concerned with the community not seeing them as bad parents and/or families.

- Parents felt that their children were growing up too fast, creating issues around dependency and independence (i.e. knowing when to let go) based on the tension between the cultural norms of traditional child

rearing practice and the expectations of living in modern Britain, which was seen as rewarding poor and negative behaviour and practices. The attitude of 'it takes a village to raise a child' was felt to be absent within the African-Caribbean community while it was seen to need protecting within the Asian community. Young parents caught between these expectations questioned their effectiveness which meant seeking support through parenting groups and similar programmes.

- Information, advice and guidance was deemed to be poor when it came to responding to the language needs of Asian and African communities. Parents from within the Somali community, for instance, found it difficult to gain access to information as this was often not translated into a mother tongue language. This was of particular concern to those who did not speak English, due in part, from recent migration patterns (e.g. older grandparents or recently arrived spouses).

- Internet access, while fast and now widely utilised to disseminate information, was seen as inaccessible and out of the reach of many parents who led busy lives. The richness of the information available and the sheer quantity was described as daunting and time-consuming. For some parents this felt impersonal and therefore unhelpful.

- Parents felt unwelcomed in schools and so they stayed away even though there were signs that schools were reaching out to them. Poor attendance at parent evenings were put down to the school not being welcoming and parents being too busy.

- Some parents thought there was not enough for young boys to engage in and that they needed inspirational opportunities to use up surplus energies and to challenge themselves (e.g. blowing off steam).

- Parents who were concerned with the educational under-performance of their young boys paid for private tutoring and/or accessed mentoring or other similar supplementary education provision. However, some were not sure how effective these were but felt they went some way towards providing some support in meeting their child's educational needs.

- Action is needed at four significant levels: personal/individual; community; strategic; and national.

Next steps

1. **For BTEG and partners**:

    - Dissemination and feedback seminars/sessions with parents and providers on key findings, including the launch of the information, advice and guidance flow chart, to encourage action and debate (3 - 6 months).

    - To pilot some of the approaches identified in the report in meeting BAME families and young boys support needs. Projects have been identified for Phase 2 and work will commence in the autumn and extend through to March 2011 (6 - 12 months). The projects will address the following areas:

        › *Parental skills and confidence;*

        › *Information, advice and guidance; and*

        › *Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities.*

2. **For voluntary and community support organisations**:

    - Support and development agencies working with BAME communities are well placed to play key roles in supporting grassroots organisations that are frontline working in neighbourhoods and supporting parents. They will need to work closely together to provide robust support in terms of organisational development, programme delivery and quality assurance. This would enhance and facilitate effective information, advice and guidance support as well as develop '***social action and empowerment***' capacities and approaches enabling them to better access potential long-term resource possibilities (12 - 24 months).

Introduction

The Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG), a national organisation working closely with the public sector and the voluntary and community sector, was successful in securing funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) to lead on three distinct strands of work[1]. This report is based on the third strand of BTEG's programme: research into understanding the support needs of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families with vulnerable young boys.

The research extended the work being done for the benefit of young black boys and men on the REACH national role model programme. Whereas the REACH programme activities focused primarily on the role models and engaging with local organizations working with young boys and men, the aim of this research was to focus on BAME families to understand the issues and challenges that they are facing in accessing appropriate support services. For example, the current picture shows that:

- School exclusion and attainment reflects worrying trends and concerns. Black children (boys in particular) are three times more likely to be excluded than their white counterpart (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010);
- In the criminal justice system, BAME groups continue to be disproportionately represented. Black young people are seven times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police than their white peers (Youth Justice Board, 2009);
- In the field of healthcare, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people are more likely to report that their health is poor or very poor, and along with Indians, are significantly more at risk from diabetes (Chakraborty and McKenzie, 2001; Bebbington et al, 2007; National Health Service, 2010).

The aims of the research were:

- To investigate and gain an understanding of the support needs of BAME vulnerable families in relation to existing support programmes in place to improve and enhance opportunities for families and individuals.

1 As part of the Department for Communities and Local Government's *Tackling Race Inequalities Strategy: Improving Communities* (2008), in February, 2009, the Government announced proposals to support third sector organisations through the Tackling Race Inequalities Fund (TRIF) to explore concerns of racial equality. As a result twenty-seven (27) national and regional organisations received funding totaling £8.8 million over two years, to implement a range of initiatives to kick start the process of narrowing the inequalities gap. The projects funded aimed to tackle: Equal opportunities for people from BAME communities; Inequalities of access to services; Increasing civic participation; Tackling racially motivated crime; Helping disadvantaged groups and Research into race equality. BTEG was contracted to deliver against three interlocking strands: Strengthening and developing local BAME forums; Policy development and information sharing; and Research into understanding the support needs of BAME families with vulnerable young boys.

- To evaluate the extent to which ***The Think Family Strategy*** supports the needs of vulnerable BAME families in raising aspiration leading to better outcomes for their young boys with regards to education attainment, mental healthcare and offending/anti-social behaviour.

- To initiate an action research 'support' model in response to the needs identified by BAME families.

The report is structured to enable the reader to understand the context, challenges and processes involved in capturing some of the reflected voices of parents.

Context and challenges

Against the background of raising educational achievement the former Labour Government had been prompted into action to intervene as early as possible to make a difference and invest significant sums of money. Since Every Child Matters (2004) a series of initiatives have been put in place to tackle underachievement through working with families as one way of trying to break the cycle of underachievement and disadvantage. These measures were given further credence and impetus through the publication of the Children's Plan (2007), which had set out the former Government's vision for supporting families to achieve the best outcome possible for all children and young people.

In May 2010, a new Coalition Government was elected; the impact and potential change in political and strategic direction across a range of social and economic sectors is yet to be confirmed. What is clear, however, is that the drive to improve the outcomes for children and families is paramount to both the economic recovery and the social fabric of our civil society. One of the key social change drivers within this change agenda, is the extent to which the 'Big Society' principles and values engages with and further develops the capacity and potential of BAME communities[2]. An inability to access support and opportunities as they unfurl is likely to place such families at a disadvantage. Access to viable and effective support is crucial to achieving positive outcomes. BAME families are at the sharp end and an inability or lack of awareness of what's out there could further compound what is an already depressed situation and put them at even greater disadvantage.

Employment opportunities, by and large, are reflective of a good education. There is a vast body of research showing the link between poor educational aspiration, offending behaviour, mental healthcare and employability. While pre-employment issues are of immense concern, and therefore having implications for schooling and parenting approaches, we are particularly concerned with the raising of attainment of young boys who are in secondary education because this is the period where attitudes become grounded. It is this period that begins to place them as individuals as well as members of a wider community of players. Identities, which sometimes lead to life-long allegiances,

2 On 19th July 2010, the Prime Minister outlined the key tenet of the *Big Society* agenda and gave, perhaps to date the clearest indication of possible policy direction that will bring about a "huge culture change". He identifies three key "strands" that will need to be addressed and places the role of central government in context: "it's about saying if we want real change for the long term, we need people to come together and work together – because we are all in this together". He goes on: "*first*, social action [to] support a new culture of voluntarism, philanthropy and social action; *second*, public service reform...giving professionals more freedom and open up public services to new providers; *third*, community empowerment...to create communities with oomph." (David Cameron, 19th July 2010, Liverpool)

are formed and shaped. It is the period where they transition into adulthood and become a functioning member of civil society. For these reasons, we have concentrated our focus on the support needs of families with young boys aged 11 - 16 years old, who exhibit signs of poor educational attainment (e.g. truancy, absenteeism, poor behaviour etc), offending behaviour and/or mental health concerns. They are therefore deemed vulnerable because of these 'risk factors' for the purpose of this study.

Definitional considerations

As a unit of description, we took as our definition of families an arrangement characterised as one where there is a child living in one of the following configurations:

- Heterosexual married couple relationship.
- Co-habiting heterosexual partnerships (common law).
- Married but estranged/separated relationship.
- Extended arrangements with grandparents playing pivotal roles in the child-rearing process.
- Lone parent (either sex and not in a steady relationship – living on their own).
- Lone parent living with a partner with biological parent having visiting rights.
- Same sex partners living as 'civil partners.'
- Corporate parent arrangements, where they are placed in care home or fostered.

Another variable to clarify is that of 'social capital'. Social capital is the glue that binds communities together. It is a description of a range of non-monetary social resources that people may or may not call upon through their connections and social networks. In short, it is concerned with 'networks', 'norms' and 'values'. Barnes and Prior (2007)[3] highlight three forms of relationship that describes the function and characteristics of social capital and it is their view that best describes the role and function of families and groups in society. They are:

- bonding relationships: these are "social ties between people with similar identities and interests, enabling collective action in pursuit of common goals." These relationships are said to be characterised by strong mutual support and protection, and at the same time exclusion and closed membership (what Murray (1994) termed 'internal barricades');
- bridging relationships: these are "social ties between people with different identities and interests but some shared experiences." The important feature here is dialogue with and between different groups to facilitate joint action and mutual support;

3 Quoted in Morris, Kate et al (2008), *Think family: A literature review of whole family approaches*, Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Taskforce

- linking relationships: these are "connections between networks and external sources of power or resources, such as government agencies, enabling network members to access the means to achieve particular goals". Here concern is with power (and political power in particular) and the ability to access cadres of influence and decision-making.

Lacking social capital, whether 'bonding, bridging or linking', could lead to poor outcomes associated with social participation. It has been argued that working class communities and BAME communities are rich on bonding social capital, whereas middle class communities are rich in bridging and linking social capital. If this is true, then it may go some way to explain why some young people (boys in the main) join gangs as the 'gang' provides the missing bonding social capital that they would otherwise expect to get through the family as a unit. Given the emerging body of research into single parenthood and BAME communities, there exist a significant proportion of children living with a single parent, and as such bonding social capital may be at a premium, which would further add fuel to an already precarious and fragile set of circumstances of disadvantage (Modood, 2004). For these reasons, amongst others, it is an important variable within the mix in understanding the behaviour of some young boys and therefore of the sort of coping strategies that such families would require.

Methodological approach

A qualitative action research methodology was chosen, involving literature reviews, focus groups, survey questionnaires, case studies, structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. By action research we mean `learning by doing', whereby we look at an issue or problem and put in place a process to pilot the efficacy of the approach and hence replicability[4].

Focus groups and workshop sessions were conducted across four regions (i.e. London, West Midlands, East Midlands and North West), working with 119 parents and practitioners (see Tables 1 and 2). Interviews were conducted with parents and with practitioners involved with the delivery of Family Intervention Projects (FIPs), the Think Family Pathfinder programme and/or other parenting support programmes. This enabled us to better understand the range of support and intervention programmes in place to support families with particular and complex needs (i.e. youth crime and anti-social behaviour). Case studies were undertaken with 11 families in an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the gravity of concerns and therefore deeper insights into their support needs. These were conducted in two regions: London (eight) and West Midlands (three). Families ranged from single parent homes to married couples, from council home dwellers to owner occupied, and from students to those in employment.

The following characteristics were discernible:

- 102 parents participated in focus groups and/or workshops across four regions (i.e. London, North West, East Midlands and West Midlands) and 17 practitioners.
- 64% of parents who participated were women.
- 32% of parents lived in privately rented accommodation; 47% owner occupier and 21% Council/Housing Association accommodation.
- 27% of parents were Asian; 59% Black; 11.5% White and 2.5% of mixed race.
- 76% of parents were employed; 16% unemployed and 8% students in-training.
- 75% of parents were concerned about poor education outcomes; 20% offending behaviour and 5% mental health.
- Of those parents who provided data on their marital status (N = 70), 30% identified themselves as 'single parents' (4% of whom said they were divorced) and 70% married (see Table 3)
- Of the 102 parents who participated, 74 (or 72.5% of cohort) provided

4 See the Next Steps section at the end of the report, where a number of 'small scale' projects will be explored by way of the 'testing' stage within the action research model (O'Brien, 1998; McPherson and Baptista, 2008).

information on the number of children in their households (N = 140 children). Of this number, 43% were boys and 57% girls (see Table 4). 77% of boys were aged between 11 – 19 years old.

Table 1: Total participant breakdown by regions, gender and ethnicity[5]

		Gender		Ethnic breakdown			
Region	Overall total	Male	Female	Asian	Black	Mixed	White
London	53	13	39	1	46	1	4
West Midlands	30	4	26	30		1	
East Midlands	14	12	2		14		
North West	22	3	19	5	6	1	9
Total	119	32	86	36	66	3	13

Table 2: Break down of case study interviews by practitioners and parents[6]

Region	Practitioner	Parent
London	16	8
West Midlands		3
North West	1	
Total	17	11

5 'Total participant' include parents and practitioners who were interviewed as part of the process. There were 102 parents and 17 practitioners. For simplicity and ease of understanding, the ethnicity classification is based on the following: Asian (South Asian, including Pakistani and Bangladeshi); Black (Caribbean and African); Mixed (mixed race arising from interracial union); White (UK and non-UK)

6 In depth interviews took place with the Roma community Advisor, whose office was based in the London Borough of Newham. Though not one of the four identified BAME community groups within the original submission to the CLG, this provided us with an insight into an emerging community where issues of underperformance is far below that of the more established BAME communities that we had identified in the submission of the application to CLG (i.e. Africans, Caribbeans, Pakistani and Bangladeshi). Reflections on some of the emerging support needs within this community have been included, while recognising that more work needs to be done in a similar way as we have been able to do with regards to the needs of the African, Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.

Table 3: Break down of marital status[7]

Marital status	Asian	Black	Mixed	Total	Responses (%)
Single parent	3	14	1	18	26
Divorced	2	1		3	4
Married	19	29	1	49	70
Total	24	44	2	70	100

Table 4: Age and ethnic distribution of boys in identified households[8]

Age band of children (Yrs)	Asian	Black	Mixed	Total boys in households	Number of boys (%)
Under 5	0	1		1	2
5 - 7	5	3	0	7	12
8 - 10	2	2	2	6	10
11 - 16	11	25	1	37	62
17 - 19	1	8		9	15
Total	19	38	3	60	100

7 Parents who participated in the focus groups and who were interviewed were asked to indicate their marital status so as to help determine whether there were any particular needs associated with particular types of 'family unit' (see Section 4 of this report: Definitional considerations). 70 parents (or 69%) out of 102 parents responded to this question.

8 Those parents who participated in the focus groups, and in-depth interviews, were asked to indicate the number of children in their household, their ages and gender. In total, we were able to capture information on 140 children from 74 respondents: 43% of the children identified were boys and 57% girls (i.e. 60: 80). The data in Table 4 is based on 60 boys.

Identification of support needs: analysis and interpretation

Through the research we wanted to better inform the work in central government departments by connecting more directly with local BAME and mainstream activities aimed at reducing racial inequalities. In responding to these concerns, attention has been directed to the role and function of families. In particular, to what extent are a family's perspective influenced by feelings of defeat, complexity of life and anticipated disappointment against a backdrop of disadvantage informed by racial inequalities?

Overall, four broad areas of support can be discerned with four 'levels' identified where actions will need to be taken if we are to make a difference. The four support needs identified are:

a. Parenting skills and confidence-building.

b. Counselling support arrangements.

c. Information, advice and guidance.

d. Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities.

(a) Parenting skills and confidence:

Parental experiences of engaging with the school were mixed. Some parents reported feeling unwelcomed by the school. Other parents felt they were unable to engage with the school for activities such as parents evening, due to work patterns and prior commitments. Interestingly, a small percentage of parents admitted to feelings of inferiority in having to go back into schools because of their own experiences. Many felt that teachers knew best and so did not question them about the progress of their children. Based on our analysis of the research data, parents could be said to fall into four distinctive camps. Broadly, they are:

1. Parents who took personal responsibility "to get involved and go up to the school, email or write letters" (North London parent)

2. Parents who make "***noise and complain but do nothing***" (North London parent).

These were termed "***backing-off parents***" who fail to engage in the life of the school and yet have so much to say outside the school about the school;

3. Parents who genuinely want to get involved, but find this difficult due to genuine pressures in their lives. These parents tend to be working long hours, have one or two jobs with anti-social hours or are employed on shift working patterns and/or going through relationship crises;

4. Parents who 'don't care' (or the "***unreachables***"), whose children tend to be "***ring leaders***" and are difficult to engage. As one parent, who was a teacher, reflected, "***these parents make the teacher's life a living hell***" as their child is never at fault; it is always someone else's fault.

Those parents who were raising children as a 'single parent' remarked that for them the task is made harder because they have no one to help them. They find that they have to be mother, father and confidant, which at times blurred relationships between themselves and their children. One parent said, "...***we find it hard to spend the time with the children because of work and all the other things we have to deal with, like broken relationships, the media and all the negative messages about our worth and what we can and can't do***..." Not only this, but many reported that they wanted to raise their child differently to the way they had been brought up (what they referred to as old fashioned "***back home child***" raising practice): "***I didn't want to bring up my child the way I was brought up. We couldn't say what we wanted and we were not 'allowed in the sitting room.' They*** [her children] ***expect modern things like mobile phones, computers and so on. We try to give them what we didn't have. But somehow that doesn't seem to be enough.***" Orlando's Story - Case Study 1, provides a useful thumbnail sketch that typifies the experiences some parents have had to contend with in trying to get support for their child and/or children.

An often quoted area of concern has been the presence and role of fathers in the lives of young boys. The effectiveness and contribution that they bring to the parenting process is seen as crucial though, in most cases, missing and absent. This was summed up by an Asian mother who explained that "...***men are part of the problem. Dads have to learn a lot about raising the children. They can help with things like Urdu but [his dad] is not interested. They need to take an interest. They can ask the child how they are doing, talk to them, get involved in the routine of the child's day such as picking them up from school, and go to parents evenings. They just stay at home and do not get involved.***" Fathers, they claim, should be encouraged to participate in parenting courses and therefore more pressure needs to be applied to enable them to see this as a necessity. Children, they explained, know how to play one parent off against the other: "[he] ***knows what to do to get around*** [the] ***situation; Dads sometimes give in, believing that if they say no it's bad and you don't love the child***" (West Midlands parent). Parenting approaches were deemed positive where there was consistency in the approach by

Case study 1: Orlando's story

Orlando is an 11 year old mixed heritage boy, who lives with his lone parent mother. Orlando's mother is concerned about his educational performance. At the age of 11 he has so far moved school on three occasions and home schooled by his mother on two separate occasions during this period. Helen, Orlando's mother is of the view that her son "is being inappropriately labelled." Prior to home schooling her son she had asked the school for an adult mentor to support him and was informed that "...***he wasn't bad enough for one***." In response she would go into the school most days to monitor his progress. Orlando was eventually placed on the Special Education Needs (SEN) register after a teacher complained that "***he was not sharing sufficiently with his peers!***" As a result, Helen took Orlando out of the school and after trying unsuccessfully to find a suitable alternative, decided to home school him. When Orlando was reinstated in another school, there were constant low-level non-specific complaints made about him such as not listening in class and not behaving properly. He was once again labelled as a trouble maker.

As a result of his mother's efforts to 'home teach' Orlando, his reading age improved considerably and he now reads well above his age. Other support came from her family, especially when she was giving birth to a set of twins, one of whom died shortly after birth. Throughout this period she received no additional support from external services. Even though Orlando had experienced the death of his baby brother, he received no support to help him come to terms with it.

both parents. One participant appreciated the active involvement of her youth worker partner, who explained that "***we are a partnership***" (West Midland parent). However, those single parents we spoke to commented that they tend to give in "***to avoid frustration***," in that saying 'no' is harder for them – and as such they give in to the demands.

The starting point and focus of our research is parents with boys who are vulnerable because of their approach to school and life chances in particular. Their experiences are characterised through poor school attendance and involvement with the youth justice system. Our approach has attempted to explore the extent to which the needs of these young boys are being dealt with as part of the *Think Family* approach linked to family intervention strategies. It was therefore not surprising to find that the approach most dominant was that which started with the 'service user' as the object of intervention; that is, a focus on the child as the rationale for engaging with the family to resolve the issues/concerns at hand. The implementation of the Family Intervention Programmes (FIPs), for example, was to make a difference in developing parenting skills as well as address other more deep seated areas of concerns, such as for example, psycho-social dysfunction to housing and employment conditions[9]. However, we found that the practice varied across London, and based on the most recent national evaluation reports from York Consultancy (March 2010) and NatCent (March 2010), there are variations in practice across the country. More work and time is needed to determine the value and difference being made through this national approach. The role of community organisations, on the other hand,

9 As part of the research approach, we looked at the implementation of FIPs within two London boroughs, one in the North and the other in the West. The approaches were very different though both worked with families with multiple and complex needs and both worked with a high proportion of BAME families. One programme (North London) worked with young boys referred through the Youth Offending Service. Summaries will be produced separately and will be available on request and at the National Conference, to be held in March 2011.

were seen by many as providing some welcomed support and many felt that these would benefit from more resource and wider awareness of what they provide and where they are located. Support groups were said to be a way forward by many parents, especially if they were informal, as they offer the prospect of acquiring hard skills such as the sharing of concerns and perspectives which would enable them to better shape their approaches to parenting and to better cope with situations that life is throwing at them.

(b) Counselling support arrangements

Coping as a single parent was seen as an issue that required some counselling support. For some parents within particular communities, the stigma associated with single parenting carries with it a particular connotation that had psychological impact. Commentators make the point that, within the BAME communities, the African-Caribbean community has the highest level of single parent families (Modood, 2004; see also Table 3 above). However, it was interesting to note, from discussions and actual responses within our small sample, the number of single Asian parents. Unlike the past when it was rare to come across many single Asian parents from Pakistani communities, we understand they are now reflecting an emerging presence. People who do find themselves in these situations – and we have been told that there are many – are not always able to turn to traditional sources for help and support such as religious leaders at Mosques, for instance. They are afraid due to the likelihood of being shunned or told "***we told you so; you should not have become single***." This becomes even more problematic where the child is giving cause for concern. No one wants to be seen as "***failing as a parent***", as one respondent from the North West commented, and so nothing is said outside the immediate family. So, compounded by single parent status and having trouble 'parenting', many parents who find themselves in this situation keep the struggle close to their chest and do not share their experiences at an early stage. As one parent puts it, "***you can't go to Asian families as they will blame you. They will have a go at you and try to find fault***." And if you are said to be going to the 'wrong places' or deemed to be involved in the wrong thing (e.g. single parent or involved in mixed relationship) you could be accused of "...***trying to be a gori***" (i.e. acting as a white woman). The implication of which is avoidance and non-interaction within the family, which then places the parent at greater disadvantage (i.e. no support from within – one of the strength of bonding social capital).

Another area of concern was with respect to coping with clinical conditions such as mental health concerns. Many parents (and practitioners) felt that not enough was being done to make support services accessible to families. Of concern were issues in relation to clinical definitions, assessment and diagnoses. A number of parents commented that

Case study 2: Ahmed's story

Roshan is a Bangladeshi mother of three children who is separated from her husband. Her son, Ahmed, has a number of concerns that she has tried to secure support for. Worried about her son's situation, Roshan raised concerns with her GP as she was particularly aware of the "possibility of a problem." Roshan felt that she had to push "herself to make sure that her children's needs and concerns are taken seriously." She had to "be the one to bring them to the attention of professionals and now they realise that Ahmed has learning difficulties even though they do not agree that he has behaviour difficulties."

The implication of this is that Roshan has had to highlight and be a so-called 'pushy parent' in order to get a diagnosis on her concerns. The problem, in all likelihood, may have continued and so place her son at a disadvantage. Her son is receiving support and help for his learning difficulties, which would not have been possible if she had not pushed for his problem to be recognized.

"...*the only way to get a diagnosis was to go to Accident and Emergency (A&E), and present themselves as an accident victim before anyone would listen*." Parents in the North West felt particularly strong about this issue and asked for "...*a visual map*" that would help. A flow chart is required to help them navigate their way around NHS support services. It was generally felt that the issue surrounding mental health was considered an affliction that reflected on the 'family' rather than a medical problem. Supporting families through such periods tends to be medically focused, while some require a more supportive 'arm' with respect to coping with members experiencing mental illness. Some parents felt very strongly about the level of referrals made under the Mental Health Act by the police. They argue that coping with the anxiety that this produces goes beyond mere clinical and medical consideration. The police were seen as fast tracking black boys in particular because they were deemed to be 'aggressive': "...*what medical training do they have?*" said one parent from South London.

The case of Ahmed - Case Study 2, one of our thumbnail case study profiles, illustrates aptly the concerns being expressed with respect to 'assessment and diagnoses'. Roshan [Ahmed's mother] is an example of the parent described above as 'parent type 1': ***those who took personal responsibility***.

A third area presented by parents where they felt counselling services would be of help was around raising teenage children – boys in particular. Two themes emerged:

- knowing when to let go; and
- developing parenting skills more broadly.

Most parents felt that children are growing up too fast and they were finding it hard to maintain the 'hold' that they had on their children when they were younger. Trying to strike the balance between dependency and independence, which brings with it the possibility that they may stray from traditional cultural values and expectations, was proving to be harder than many had anticipated (or believed). As one parent put it "...

[our culture] ***is steeped in ancient texts and expectations and no one gives up*** [their] ***culture just because you are in a different country***." And another said that "...***he*** [son] ***does not do much about the house***," as she does it all for him. Once she tried to get him to do domestic chores and found that she was accused of "...***turning him into a girl***." In another conversation it was highlighted that in some families, boys are often needed to 'escort' or undertake chores where there is only a mother in the home. This could, at times, mean taking children out of school in order to deal with a query or situation at hand. Under these circumstances, these young boys are treated as 'surrogate' father figures. Coping with these issues require approaches that develop both the confidence of parents as well as to provide some therapeutic and/or cathartic release.

A particular case discussed with practitioners highlighted the gravity of not getting early support. This particular family has five children, all boys, with serious offending behaviour. When her children were young, the mother went to social services for help but had not "***met the threshold***" and so no help was provided. The youngest child is now aged 16 years old and is only now getting the sort of support that he should have received much earlier when he was exhibiting offending tendencies. The signs were not picked up, and if an effective intervention had been put in place, the youngest child may not have come to the attention of the youth justice system (and who is now facing a possible three – five year custodial sentence).

The signs were evident:

- The mother was the victim of domestic violence, though the children were not seen as being physically 'hurt' as a consequence.
- The older child was in prison for rape.
- The mother had gone to social services only after she stopped caring for her children and this action ensured she qualified for support and attention (i.e. the younger child was placed on child protection register).

Case Study 3: Donavan's Story

Donavan, a 15 year old boy of mixed heritage with an African-Caribbean mother, is experiencing severe speech delay. He did not start speaking properly until he was almost 6 years old. He did not receive linguistic support at an early stage during his education. When it was offered, it was provided on an intermittent rather than intensive basis. Teachers noticed the problem and kept on saying 'your child can't speak' but it took a long time before something was actually done. Donavan's mother is of the view that schools know the "...problems being experienced by some of their pupils, but that there is a real time lag before the required support is put in place." She is now considering hiring a private English tutor to help support her son.

In our third case study, Donavan's Story, similar issues are raised regarding poor early detection and the impact on schooling and attainment possibilities.

In moving forward, many parents felt that some form of 'parenting support group' and 'parenting programme' would be supportive both in terms of providing confidence and skills as well as therapy and catharsis. Support groups were seen as offering a space and opportunity for parents to be able to express their frustrations and to learn from others. As one parent put it, "...***so that we see that we are not alone***." Others have likened the support groups and parents programmes as therapy "...***by parents for parents***," which according to one parent, maybe formal but mostly informal in its genesis.

(c) Information, advice and guidance

Access to information was deemed to be poor across all ethnic groups. Where parents were able to access support services and/or to obtain information, there were concerns about being shunted from person to person and department to department. While information on Children's Services provision was known by some parents, far more were not able to access the internet, which is now where local information is captured. The absence of personal contact was a concern: "...***there is a lot of information around but what we don't have is communication***."

Many parents felt that the presence of support services and opportunities available to them were not as widely publicized as they would like. In the main, many were concerned that information were driven through the internet and that, given their work-life patterns, this did not encourage them to surf the net when they were tired (and some did not feel confident in using the internet). A more simple and easy to follow guide or flow diagram was deemed by two focus groups to be a useful start. They thought also that if parent support groups were developed, such a forum could also act as a conduit for disseminating and sharing key information; especially as many felt a more 'engaging' approach as opposed to the distant and de-personalised medium of the internet, however interactive it may try to be, would be better suited to them and their learning style (i.e. as parents with busy and challenging home lifestyles).

The parent/school interface appears to be of particular concern. For many this is the arena where they feel the 'greatest damage' is being done to their child/ren and where they feel, if this could be put right, then there would be a smooth transition into adulthood. The differences in the approaches to the involvement of parents in the education of their children were quite stark across the two major ethnic groups that we spoke to. Engaging with the school about their children's progress was mixed. Some parents felt that the school system was trying to engage as indicated by the 'diary' system that most schools seem to have in place. The diary was seen as a "***fantastic idea***"

as teachers used it "***to check that I signed it and this goes to the Head of Year, who looks at it and the teachers do look at the diaries and raise issues regarding changes in behaviour***" (West Midlands parent). And another parent remarked that they find their son's school to be helpful, where "***they can go to them*** [teachers] ***or they would visit us at home***." (West Midlands parent) This was made possible in her case because her school had a team of 'education welfare teachers' whose role it was to engage with parents facing difficulties. As such this support process has been found to be very helpful particularly in relation to forming a bridge between home and school. However, this was not the experience that many of the parents we spoke to recounted. They also pointed to the opportunities afforded through 'Parents Evenings' and most recently, the use of 'text messaging' to alert them to school activities and news. More and more news and information is being transmitted via the internet and websites. While this can speed up information flow, what we found was that the technology is moving faster than the parents can cope with, though appreciated and accessed by their children.

The absence of mother tongue speakers in some schools was seen as a particular obstacle for some parents of Asian and African heritage. Respondents in the North West and West Midlands, for instance, were concerned that some information was not translated into "***community mother tongue languages***." The Somali parents that we spoke to, for instance, had particular and specific concerns in regard to language barriers and cultural expectations (i.e. wearing of PE kits for girls, for instance). They were finding difficulties in getting materials translated and this had brought some parents into conflict with the system. While many were keen to learn the English language they felt that there were instances where the school did not appreciate their cultural needs. They cited a range of concerns that, if rectified, would make a vast difference over time and would therefore remove barriers to access and engagement with schools. The feeling is that this community does not feel part of the education system.

As with the Somali parents we spoke to, Asian parents found that language barriers prevented them from better understanding the education system. This was particularly the case where there was one partner born in the UK and the other coming from Pakistan or Bangladesh (usually the husband). In these cases, the pressures on the mother was often heightened, as the husband is unable to engage with the formal structures and arrangements within schools, due in the most part to their inability to speak or understand English (i.e. translation of information).

(d) Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities

While this was not an area of strong concern there were some parents who felt that the presence of good youth provision would provide a release valve for many youths as they transition into adulthood. As one parent explained, "*we don't have any facilities in the area. The youth club has been closed and the youths do not have anywhere to go. I grew up in the area and when I was their age we used to hang out and do lots of activities. These kept us busy and so wasn't at home giving our parents problems. As we were growing we wanted to do things and not always what our parents wanted but now these clubs do not exist and many of the children are stuck at home playing video games, playing with mobile phones and watching television. We interacted with people and not play on our own or stuck in our room*" (West Midlands parent). This view was not a lone voice, as other parents also commented on the usefulness of such facilities and opportunities. However, their observations were linked to the types of activities that they saw (or felt) were taking place. "*What we need,*" said one parent in North London, "*are clubs and activities that are inspirational and challenge our youth to be better than they are and to get them to see the future instead of just hanging around. In our days we used to do exciting things around music, drama, go out to other clubs, play competitions and generally get to know other people through the activities. Today, I hear so much about post codes and even hear my boys talking different languages that they seem to have picked up from somewhere. What's this about? Where are the inspirational talks that we used to get? Who is telling them that what they are doing is no good?*"

Interestingly, fathers were more concerned than the mothers about the lack of youth facilities and places to play and hang out. They saw these as opportunities that would provide young people with an outlet and so provide welcome respite for families. This was especially seen as important where, as young people grew older, they were making greater demands in the home in trying to establish an identity as a young and emerging adult. This could create conflict with parents, especially with regards to their expectations and desire to exercise control. The argument goes, if there was a good level of provision then some young people would be able to vent their frustrations they may be having, instead of having pent up feelings and frustrations and then lashing out at parents for not giving them the 'space'. As one parent explained "...*a balance needs to be struck. When I was growing up* [in the area] *we used to have a youth club where we could go and chill out with friends. This was good because we weren't just coming home from school only to do homework. Nowadays, the youth club is not there and young people are getting frustrated, which will lead to crime and violence because they don't have an outlet.*" However, this was not a commonly held view within the group. While there was an acknowledgement that young people need positive activities and outlets, some parents were of the view that sometimes youth clubs are also places where young people get into "*bad company and influence*" from those who will have

a negative impact on their child, as a parent in the West Midlands argued. Overall, the views appear to be mixed, with some strong views on both sides. As with any discussion there are two sides to the argument and, as with all provision, it is very much a case of how they are run and what takes place in them by way of interesting opportunities that the young people will want. What the young people want is not likely to be the same as what their parents want. This is a generational issue. What is clear, also, is that play, leisure and recreation, as well as having an outlet for either pent up energies or repressed emotion, are vital for developmental reasons, coping mechanisms and survival strategies (Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2008)[10].

Another feature coming through relates to the provision of supplementary (or complementary) education provision. Where this was said to be in place, many parents found them to be supportive and helpful. Most of the parents we spoke to, and who expressed concerns over the educational direction of their son(s), felt the need to 'pay for' private tuition in order to augment the school curriculum to support their child. Many felt that it gave them greater control over the learning agenda, which included a focus on cultural imperatives such as religio-cultural aspects as well as basic learning skills. All the case study families in this study, felt that the school was not able (or would not) provide the extra learning opportunities that they felt were needed and so they looked to alternative sources. Other sources of 'complementary' provision came in the guise of 'mentorship' programmes, which provided for some 1:1 support as well as whole group interface. All of these were highly praised by the parents who used them. However, discussions with some providers highlighted a number of critical concerns about the future as well as current delivery of supplementary education provision. On the one hand, some were fearful of the lack of available resources to develop their provision, and given the impending general election at the time, it was felt that these services would cease to operate, come the new academic year starting in September 2010. Some parents questioned the quality of the delivery and wanted to know which ones were effective and of "***good quality***." For some, it was a case of "***supporting local community provision***" (South London parent) while others saw the provision as plugging the academic gap in the education of their child. Work was deemed to be necessary to demonstrate to parents which provision was effective, to provide them with real choices and options, from which they could choose. This also raised questions about the commissioning of provision at the local authority level as part of the wider support provision to children and families: what are they doing with respect to the quality assurance of the provisions they are funding?

10 Aim High: Ten Year Strategy (2008) makes the case that positive activities, as opposed to 'youth clubs', should be the approach to help raise attainment and curb anti-social and criminal behaviour. Since the 2006 Education Act, all local authorities have had to 'promote positive activities' taking place in their area. These are often captured in on-line directories under the work of the Family Information Service (FIS) sections, which all local authorities have in place.

Policy implications

The qualitative approach adopted in this report has tried to go beneath the surface to explore with families their perspectives on what are their support needs in coping with raising young boys who are vulnerable and at risk of poor outcomes. The response was positive with some frank and animated exchanges – some born out of frustration and anxiety and others reflecting disappointment and concerns about the future. For some parents, this was an opportunity to express their frustration and to see their views being taken seriously. The case studies of Orlando, Ahmed and Donavan, illustrate these points well. What these three examples revealed were the levels of frustration and resilience amongst parents trying to secure the best outcomes for their children, despite the adversities and hurdles being placed before them. The parents spoke candidly about the length of time it took and the hoops they felt they had to jump through in order to be recognized as having a genuine concern and need. They were by no means the only examples of issues concerning assessment and diagnosis posed by parents as real concerns. As one parent from the North West puts it: "***it is a torturous route to get some one statemented as having special educational need before resources and support can be provided***."

Four levels of 'effectiveness' have been identified where work needs to take place in order to respond to the needs identified. The four levels of 'effectiveness' where actions need to be taken are:

- Individual/personal.
- Community services.
- Statutory services (or local government).
- National government (policy and strategy).

Actions need to be taken at different layers of influence as no single layer holds the key to life chances and opportunities alone. It is therefore the balance across these four levels which are likely to make a difference. Against the evidence derived from the diagnostic phase of the action research model, and working within the financial constraints in place, we recognize a range of policy possibilities that could make a difference in meeting the support needs of families with vulnerable boys. They are:

- Parenting skills and confidence: More time is required to truly assess the effectiveness of the Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) and the wider *Think Family* roll out. The early intervention, coordination, assessment and referral processes need to be given time to develop. The ability to capture relevant and meaningful data that can inform decision-making, rather than data for data's sake, will take more time and likely to go through stages of refinements before they can be truly relied on. More time is therefore required with greater monitoring and evaluation of the take-up of these programmes by BAME families. In particular, the extent to

which the programmes prevent escalation into crime and/or anti-social behaviour, raising attainment by developing parenting skills and improving the confidence of parents.

- Counselling support: The commissioning of provision, while a role for local authorities (in the main), is of some concern, in terms of the overall quality assurance systems in place to ensure good quality standards are maintained. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some commissioning of family intervention programmes are not as effective as they could be. Commissioners of services (whether central or local government) need to give some consideration to how they commission and who they contract with. While there are some effective parenting programmes, the quality assurance processes in place for some small commissioned projects lack rigour and systematic evaluative validity and recognition[11].

- Information, advice and guidance: Parents have told us that they look to the voluntary and community sector to provide additional support with respect to information, advice and guidance and yet, as many indicate, while some of these projects are effective they lack the capacity. National, regional and local BAME support organisations should target local groups working with families to help improve their capacity and information dissemination. Local groups need access to support and funding in order to expand their services.

- Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities: The quality and standards of delivery of private tutoring and supplementary and out of school hours study support are variable. There is no ***accountable*** body that oversees the work of supplementary education that holds providers accountable for delivery[12] in the same way that Ofsted holds schools accountable. Research generally, and the parents we spoke to, agree, that children and young people can benefit from participating in supplementary education support programmes and the most disadvantaged can benefit most, especially where informal learning styles and

11 A recent BTEG survey, 'Mapping Survey and Gap Analysis Report' (unpublished, July 2010), found that 70% of voluntary organisations who responded to the survey (N = 66) did not have in place any quality standards framework or were aware of any national or local standards (i.e. just over a quarter - 28% - were using PQASSO or similar). Interviews with practitioners and commissioners in London highlighted concerns of the absence of quality systems within some small organisations funded to deliver counselling and similar programmes. Silvestri et al (2009), in relation to gun and knife crime prevention programmes, draws attention to the paucity and absence of good quality monitoring and evaluation systems in place within this area of concern (i.e. youth crime). They write: "*Remarkably few interventions on youth knife and gun crime, nationally and internationally, have been subjected to rigorous research and/or independent assessment*" (pg 5).

12 Through the work of *Continyou* and the *National Resource Centre* (NRC), a Quality Framework, based on three levels of Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards, have been developed and was launched in April 2009. However, the scheme is voluntary with no accountability for delivery. There is also an absence of compulsion that requires providers to obtain the kite mark.

opportunities complemented the in-school lessons. However, identification and signposting to effective provision does not currently exist, nor does there exist a framework of 'determining' effective supplementary and alternative education and support programmes such as that developed by the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network[13] to 'measure effectiveness' of alternative provision for at-risk young people and families (i.e. at risk of not graduating). Some further work is required to determine the effectiveness of supplementary education programmes in the UK and how to signpost parents to effective provisions.

13 The *National Dropout Prevention Center/Network* (NDPC/N) serves as a clearing house on issues related to drop-out prevention, offering strategies designed to increase the graduation rate in America's schools. The NDPC/N is a well-established national resource for sharing solutions for student success. It does so through its clearing house function, active research projects, publications, and through a variety of professional development activities, including conducting a variety of third party evaluations and Program Assessment and Reviews (PAR).(see http://www.dropoutprevention.org/ndpcdefault.htm)

Recommendations

There are four areas where action is required to meet the needs identified. Appendix 1 outlines in more detail these actions and it is our recommendation that the actions identified at the following levels will make a difference:

- Individual/personal.
- Community services.
- Statutory services (or local government)
- National government (policy and strategy)

Just as the reasons are multiple, so are the solutions. No one single strand will work in isolation. A number of interlocking approaches and messages need to come together to bring about the desired changes. For instance, work at the community service delivery level could be negatively affected through actions at the local authority level (e.g. a reduction in funding which then causes a programme to cease operating). It is therefore the balance across these four levels which is likely to make a difference, and within a tight fiscal environment as we have today, there is likely to be some impact on the continual funding of some community and voluntary provisions at a time when many parents are seeking support through this route.

Conclusions

What the research has so far revealed are snapshots and some tentative observations based on a particular approach. While further work is necessary, and is on-going, we have been able to show that there are a range of circumstances and factors at play in raising children; in particular, young boys. It is not the case that any one factor stands out but rather a combination and pattern of circumstances coalesce to produce the net outcome. Parental support and home circumstances are vital building blocks for an effective upbringing and these cannot be overlooked or understated. Being able to recognize the signs that contribute to poor attainment is crucial in ensuring an appropriate and relevant support structure is put in place. Too often the voices and concerns of parents have not been taken seriously, and as our case studies illustrated, many parents take it upon themselves to seek out support in the guise of alternative and supplementary education opportunities, for example. Parents play a vital role in the shaping of attitudes and in the opening up of opportunities for their children. This should not be left to chance. Despite the fact that BAME families with vulnerable boys have to deal with barriers to do with race, poverty and discrimination, they overwhelmingly want to be encouraged, supported and enabled to be better parents. Support, in the guise of parenting courses or similar, was said to offer opportunities to "***learn how to develop self and setting up systems with rewards***" that have been shown to be successful. Effective parenting makes a difference.

Based on the analysis, an absence of effective parenting skills, leading to poor boundaries being established, could lead to poor educational outcomes and possible involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. Thus:

- We noted that in the homes where young boys were giving cause for concern, where the parents were trying to be a friend, they failed to be an effective parent. The result of this was to blur boundaries with the concomitant effect of poor behaviour in and outside the home (i.e. what some parents referred to as being "***wrenk and rude***").

- Mood swings, coupled with periods of silence and `grumpiness', meant parents were "***leaving them alone***" which then meant parents were unaware of poor school attendance and completion of assigned school work (and those who are deemed 'unreachables', this is often translated as a problem for the school and not a matter for the parents). As one parent put it, "***everything*** [for her child] ***is a chore and a burden***," and this often created tension and conflict in the home.

- Parents noted that many of the young boys displayed negative attitudes to participating in activities outside the home (i.e. bridging social capital

opportunities). These boys felt there was no point in getting involved in hobbies or past times with boundaries which instilled discipline or rigour or that would provide a wide cross section of views and opinions. Instead, these boys preferred to "***hang around with groups of older boys***" (North London parent), and immerse themselves in a world defined by their own private linguistic codes.

- Parents are rightly concerned about some negative attitudes based on racial stereotyping that create a barrier for their child to progress. In the words of one of the parents from South London: "...***children are being wrongly judged based on 'opinions' widely available out there.*** [My child] ***is said to be loud and boisterous because he will say what's on his mind...black boys are seen as trouble makers because they speak their mind.***"

- In relation to mental health concerns, "[BAME families] ***are not accepting the commonly held definitions of mental health***" (North West parent), and so do not access the services.

What we have been able to do so far is to scratch the surface; further work needs to take place. In going forward, the challenge is daunting. This point was summed up well by one parent from North London who said that: "***fear is the obstacle to progress...only when it affects us do we get involved***." From the emerging responses and contributions, it is evident that BAME families are justly concerned about the progress their young boys are making in today's society. It is worrying for them as it is for the wider society. Recognising the signs that could have negative impact is therefore critical in order for effective support to be put in place.

We hope that we have been able to open up a debate not only on what the support needs are for some BAME families, but a wider debate on what it means to be a parent in the 21st century. Tougher conversations and decisions need to take place! Therefore, doing nothing is not an option.

Next steps: action projects

1. **For BTEG and partners**:

   - Dissemination and feedback seminars/sessions with parents and providers on key findings, including the launch of the information, advice and guidance flow chart, to encourage action and debate. This is attached as Appendix 2 (3 - 6 months).

   - To pilot some of the approaches identified in the report in meeting BAME families and young boys support needs. Projects have been identified for Phase 2 and work will commence in the autumn and extend through to March 2011 (6 - 12 months). The projects will address the following areas:

     › Parental skills and confidence;

     › Information, advice and guidance; and

     › Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities.

2. **For voluntary and community support organisations**:

   - Support and development agencies working with BAME communities are well placed to play key roles in supporting grassroots organisations that are frontline working in neighbourhoods and supporting parents. They will need to work closely together to provide robust support in terms of organisational development, programme delivery and quality assurance. This would enhance and facilitate effective information, advice and guidance support as well as develop '***social action and empowerment***' capacities and approaches enabling them to better access potential long-term resource possibilities (12 - 24 months).

Post-script

We would like to hear your views on our ideas in this research paper. Contact Karl Murray, Head of Research at Karl@bteg.co.uk

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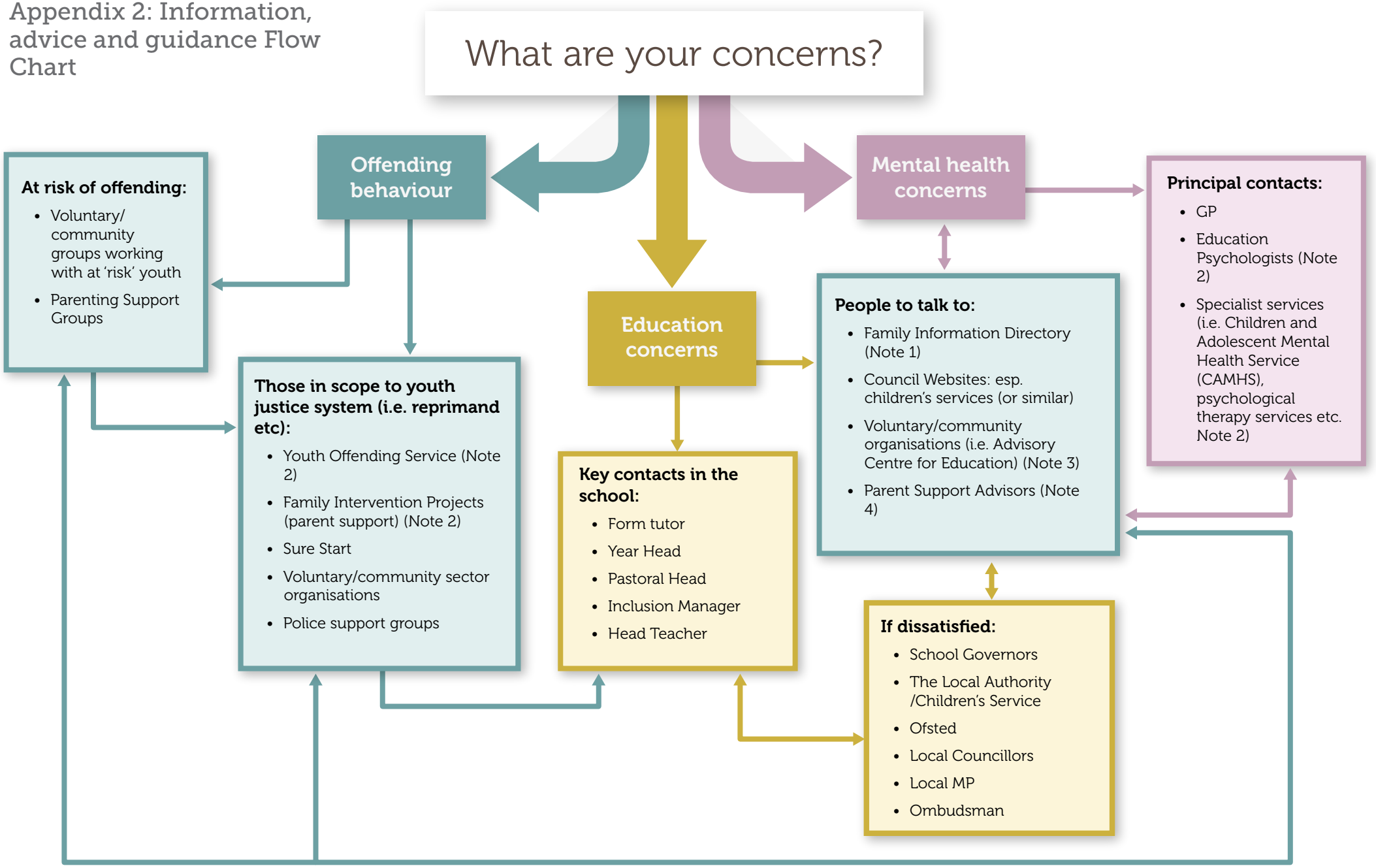
Appendices

Appendix 1: Recommended key actions

Levels at which change need to take place	Parenting skills and confidence	Counselling support	Information, advice and guidance	Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities
Individual (personal control)	Address and improve parenting practices and priorities: • Parenting programmes • Modelling good practice • Inculcate a 'learning and aspirational' environment • Support group	Seek out and access counselling opportunities: • Informal arrangements (e.g. parent support groups) • Statutory services • Private • Voluntary and community based services	Position self and be motivated to access IAG provisions that are available: • Voluntary and community services • Statutory services (children and adult services) • Private • Others (i.e. school)	Find out, encourage and support children to participate in opportunities such as: • Engaging and aspirational youth programmes • Play and after school provisions • Family/charitable events • Volunteering
Voluntary and Community services (empowerment)	Encourage, champion and promote the value of good parenting in the community: • Parenting (i.e. fatherhood; skills etc) • community support • churches/mosques/faith community • intergenerational opportunities • support group development	Develop and establish appropriate culturally sensitive provisions and opportunities: • mediation services • parent support • therapeutic and psychological services	Establish and seek opportunities to develop and sustain IAG provision and services that reflects need: • education • offending • mental health • others (e.g. housing; immigration etc)	Provide and facilitate community operated activities and provisions for children, young people and parents through: • Volunteering opportunities • Creation of community based scholarship programme • Develop enterprise 'focused' programmes that offers employability opportunities • Supplementary/ complementary education programmes

Levels at which change need to take place	Parenting skills and confidence	Counselling support	Information, advice and guidance	Opportunities for young boys to engage in inspirational activities
Statutory services (local government)	Provide 'parenting' support opportunities and provisions through: • Direct provision • Training and development (e.g. voluntary and community organisations etc) • Funding to local support providers (e.g. parenting support groups) • Strategic planning • Engagement and consultation	Enable and facilitate counselling provision in local areas, whether directly delivered or commissioned.	Ensure information is widely available and accessible to those who need it most: • Establish 'Access Points' for adult IAG delivery (i.e. outlets) • Electronic medium • Flyers and leafleting • Facilitate the establishment of 'parenting support groups' as forums for sharing information • Translation and interpreting services	Directly or commissioned provisions that facilitate the development and availability of: • Youth support provisions (i.e. aspirational programmes) • Play and after school provisions • Parent and family focused opportunities • Employment opportunities (inc. Volunteering) • Supplementary/ complementary education programmes
National government (policy and strategy)	Set clear family friendly policies and framework that: • Facilitate and encourages effective parenting provisions and opportunities. • Financial and welfare support for those who are most in need; • Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of policy and delivery • Engage and consult with parents and families so as to better inform policies and plans • Engage and consult with third sector BAME organisations working with, and supporting parents and families, so as to better inform policies and plans			

Appendix 2: Information, advice and guidance Flow Chart



Note 1: http://www.familyinformationservices.org.uk/#
Note 2: Information can only be accessed if parents have been formally referred to these services.
Note 3: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm
Note 4: http://www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/extendedschools/whatarees/parentingsupport/psa_project.aspx

About BTEG

BTEG is a national charity providing a voice to government for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. BTEG has a successful track record of advising government departments and non-departmental bodies and providing organisational support for local groups. BTEG is a member of several central governmental advisory groups including Department of Works Pension's (DWP) Ethnic Minority Advisory Group, the Department for Education's Third Sector Group and Communities and Local Government's Voluntary and Community Sector Board.

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