

What do you think about disability?

Our names are Mark and Mairian. We are doing a project at Leeds University. Our project is called 'Life as a Disabled Child'. We have been talking to young disabled people in Leeds. We have met some children at home and some in school. Here are some of their questions and some of the things they told us.



What do you think disabled means?

They've either got learning disabilities or they're physically disabled.

Disabled is more where you can't see or walk.

I think it includes everybody who's got problems. I think everyone's included in the word 'disabled'...I think that if you've got a disability then you're the same.

Everybody's got a form of disability. Some people are slow, some people are stronger in other areas and slower in that, so everybody has a form of disability.

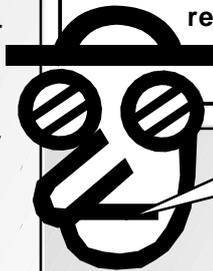
Nobody's disabled 'cos everyone has problems doing something don't they?

We're all disabled in one way.

Everybody has some sort of disability, some sort in size, shape or whatever, 'cos they can't walk or they find difficulties or whatever.

This is what we did:

We met about 50 children from 14 different schools. Some of them went to ordinary schools and some went to special schools. Everyone we spoke to was aged between 11 and 16 years old. We used a tape recorder so we could remember what everyone said.



What's it like being disabled?

I realised I wasn't like everyone else, I was different.

...we're not segregated as much as we used to be.

...when people see that you're disabled, they basically think that's all you can do.

I think a lot of people probably think like, 'I'm disabled I can't owt can I?', and stay on benefits for the rest of their life, but I don't wanna be like that.

If they were disabled, and if we came up to them and picked on them, they wouldn't like it.

Racism and disability prejudice. They're all the same thing really

To find out more, contact:

Mark Priestley at the Disability Research Unit
University of Leeds, LEEDS, LS2 9JT

Telephone: Leeds 2334417

E-mail: m.a.priestley@leeds.ac.uk



Do you think that disabled people are like the same as ordinary people?



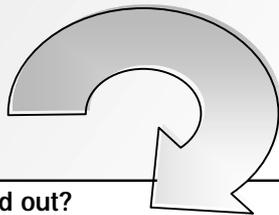
To some people disabled can mean,
Being abnormal and different,
Why can't they see,
That we are quite normal and similar to them,
We're just normal women and men.

It just means you've got slightly more problems than other people but it doesn't mean you can't do the same things that everybody else does.

A disabled person is like any other person with something slightly wrong which may or may not affect them very much.

You should go beyond disability and just look at the person inside.

I just try to ignore it and join in.



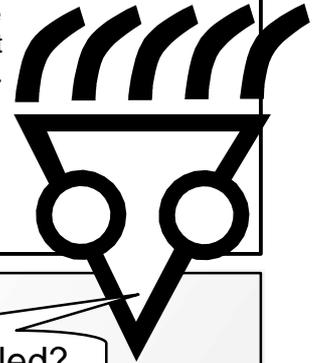
What else did we find out?

This newsletter is all about disability. All the questions and answers are from children in Leeds. We asked them about lots of other things too. These are some of things they wanted to tell us about.

- Family
- Friends and relationships
- School
- Other people's attitudes
- Going out
- Work experience
- Hospitals and doctors
- The future

What do you think they said about these things?

We met children and young people with learning difficulties, children with hearing impairments, children with physical impairments, children with visual impairments and children with specific learning difficulties (like dyslexia). Some children did not like to be called disabled. Some of them did not know the word. Some children used different words, like 'special needs'.



Do you like being disabled?

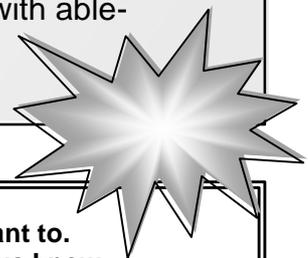
I like the idea of having power as a disabled person. I mean, instead of just being fobbed off.

I feel it's a good word. I feel it's okay, but in some situations I'm not, we're not always disabled.

Some people think it will make us sad, But we like being different, We're happy and glad.

I think its better when there is a few or quite a lot of people who are disabled in a school because you don't feel alone.

It's different from being with able-bodied. I think it's better.



You can copy this newsletter and show it to anyone you want to. If you want to find out more about our project then please let us know. Our address is on the front of this newsletter. We can talk to you and show you things we have written. We can tell you about other projects that you may be interested in.