

## Project note

### Kidscreen for children with special educational needs

#### Background

Over the last three years, the research unit has been supporting Birmingham City Council in the collection of high quality outcome data on children and young people living in the conurbation in order to be able to monitor trends in well-being. As a result the local authority has robust data on the services children receive, their outcomes and the influences that bear upon them. There is an acknowledged gap, however, in understanding the needs of some children with special educational needs (SEN). The category includes children with learning difficulties, communication impairments and those whose problems are on the autistic spectrum. Despite attempts to make the standard measurement tools accessible to all (eg. by the use of audio-assistive technology) they are not suitable for all children with cognitive impairments.

#### Aim

In collaboration with special schools across the City, the Unit aims to:

- develop tools for measuring the well-being of children with SEN
- support special and mainstream schools in using these methods
- test the reliability and validity of such an approach
- use the data to inform services for children with SEN
- disseminate the findings and methodologies.

#### Method

Existing tools were found to be limited in either applicability to children with SEN or in their scope. A decision was therefore taken to adapt Kidscreen 52, a robust questionnaire for assessing the quality of life of children between the ages of eight and 18. The originators, Kidscreen Group Europe, are supporting this adaptation. The method involves an expert advisory group in making simplifications and improvements and then testing the result with children using a procedure called 'cognitive interviewing'. This process is repeated until the instrument works well enough in practice. The final adaptation will be rolled out in special and mainstream schools across the city for use with between 300 and 500 children. Schools are being offered training and administration manuals. The scientific and psychometric properties of the questionnaire will be assessed (in terms of reliability and validity) and further refinements made.

#### Funder

The work is supported by a small grant from the Nuffield Foundation

#### Timescale

2008–2009

#### Dissemination

The work will result in a questionnaire and administration manual being available from the Kidscreen Group Europe. The findings will be presented at an international conference and in academic articles. A report will be made to the Nuffield Foundation.

#### Contact

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