



Info 4

Learning about your
culture, identity and
well-being

NCB's vision is a society in which all children and young people are valued and their rights are respected.

By advancing the well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives, NCB aims to:

- * reduce inequalities in childhood
- * ensure children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives
- * promote positive images of children and young people
- * enhance the health and well-being of all children and young people
- * encourage positive and supportive family, and other environments.

NCB has adopted and works within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Welcome from NCB

This booklet is for children and young people in care who are from an ethnic minority community and who want to learn more about their identity, their culture and their well-being.

It is based on the brilliant work of a group of young people in Leeds, who worked together on the original Info 4 U Project in 2008. This is what Chloe, Jade, Shardel and Yasmin said about their experience:

We answered an invite for young people to become involved in making this book. There was a promise of fun, opportunities to learn a new skill and meet other young people. We are very proud of the book because it has lots of information for everyone and it helps you to learn things you didn't know. We hope you will like reading it. And the next time you see an invite to get involved in something we hope you do.

This version has been expanded and updated for young people across the UK. It's a guide to finding out more about the things that can help you stay happy and positive when you're growing up. It doesn't have all the answers but we hope that you find it interesting and helpful in thinking about what makes you feel good.

This booklet has been adapted from Leeds City Council's *Info 4 U* booklet. It has been updated and edited by Rachel Pope and Laura Smith for NCB. The contributions of young people in Leeds, and the work of the staff of Leeds City Council, have been vital in the development of this national resource and we are grateful to them for sharing *Info 4 U* with us.

A note about language: We recognise that there are lots of ways of describing a person's ethnicity, and no agreement on the best way to describe the wide diversity of people who are not 'White British'. In this booklet we have chosen to use the term 'ethnic minority'. The same language is used by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. It includes members of white minorities, such as Irish, Polish or Roma. We use the term 'mixed race' to describe people who identify themselves as having more than one ethnicity or culture. A recent survey has suggested that this is the term that most mixed race people choose to use, though once again we recognise that there is no one description which everyone agrees on.

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This booklet is part of a set of resources, produced by NCB, which aims to improve the health and well-being of children and young people from ethnic minority communities in and leaving care. We worked with pilot sites in Leeds, Northamptonshire and Bradford to develop the resources; and we would like in particular to thank the following staff for their advice, guidance and contributions to the project as a whole:

- ★ Pat Case, Leeds City Council;
- ★ Floyd Douglas, Northamptonshire County Council;
- ★ Mark Eades-Jones, Barnardo's Seen and Heard, Bradford.

Whether you come from a council estate or a country estate, your success will be determined by your own confidence and fortitude. We are counting on you, we are counting on every single one of you to be the best that you can be.

Michelle Obama, First Lady of the USA, speaking to pupils at a school in London

Section 1:

Taking care of yourself

You have the right to good health care. If you are being looked after, you will receive a yearly health check to make sure you are fit and well.

Being healthy means feeling good about yourself, physically, mentally and emotionally – and having the energy to get the most out of life.

Things like exercise, healthy eating and getting enough sleep all have a positive effect on your health.

Smoking, drinking, misusing drugs, stress and poor diet have a bad effect on your health. If you are worried about anything to do with your health, ask to see your doctor.

In all cultures, everyday personal care and appearance is very important and should not be forgotten. This includes paying attention to personal hygiene, hair, skin, teeth, diet, clothing and health.

Personal hygiene

All bodies have natural and pleasant smells, but stale sweat causes body odour. It is important that you wash, take a bath or shower every day, and preferably after exercising. This will keep unpleasant body odour away and go towards keeping skin healthy.

Using deodorants or body sprays after washing will help to keep your body smelling fresh. Also, make sure your clothes are changed and washed regularly, especially your socks and underwear.

Changes at Puberty

As you get older your body starts to change from that of a child to that of an adult. For example, girls will start to develop breasts and start their periods, boys' voices will deepen and they might grow more hair on their face. These changes are all part of puberty, and people go through it at different ages.

It is really common to worry about whether the changes to your body and your feelings are normal. Everyone is different so there is no such thing as normal, but if you are worried or have any questions then ask an adult you feel comfortable talking to – if you don't feel like talking to your carer then ask a doctor or a nurse.

Hair

There are many different types of hair. It may be straight, it may be curly. Whatever type of hair you have, the basic rules of shampooing and conditioning should be followed.

You don't have to wash your hair every day. If you wash it every day you can strip your hair of its natural oils.

If you have afro hair, you can care for your hair by:

- ★ using conditioners and shampoos recommended for afro hair
- ★ avoiding most shampoos and conditioners in adverts (unless they are for afro hair), as they contain high levels of alkaline and alcohol that can dry and strip afro hair of its natural oils
- ★ applying hair creams or pomades (hair lotions) straight after washing and drying your hair (take care not to over-dry your hair as this may break it)
- ★ applying hair creams or oil before using hairdryers
- ★ using a wide-tooth comb on your hair (combing your hair morning and night helps to keep it free of knots).

After you swim, always shampoo, condition and moisturise hair. This is important because the chemicals in pools will dry out your hair.

Plaiting your hair or adding hair extensions is often considered the best way of keeping it tidy and can be done in a way that follows the latest fashion trends.

Cutting and styling your hair should be done by a qualified hairdresser. Have a look in hair and

beauty magazines like *Ebony*, *Black Hair* and *Black Hair and Beauty* – they can help keep you up to date on styles and give you information and advice. They should be available in your library, hairdressers or newsagents.

Avoid experimenting with chemical hair products, for example, bleaching it a different colour or perming it yourself.



If you are of Asian origin, the basic rules of washing and conditioning hair apply. Some people also massage oils such as coconut oil, olive oil and other herbal oils into the hair to maintain good healthy hair.

Skin

People's skin differs in colour, texture and type. The colour of your skin is determined by the colour of your parents' skin. It is also determined by the level of melanin (natural skin pigment) in your skin. The higher the melanin, the darker your skin. Some people have dry skin, some have oily skin and some have a combination of both.

Dry skin needs to be cared for and protected by regularly moisturising it with creams and lotions. This is even more important during the winter months, when your skin is often more at risk from excess dryness. You can care for your skin by:

- ★ using the right products for your type of skin
- ★ moisturising regularly with body lotions and creams to relieve dryness and to keep your skin soft
- ★ using oil-based products, body lotions and creams especially developed for darker skin (if you have this), for example cocoa butter
- ★ avoiding alcohol-based products, as these can further dry your skin

- ★ using bath oils in the bath
- ★ moisturising after showering and bathing.



Face mask fun!

Exposure to the sun

It is often thought that people with darker skin cannot get sunburnt. But everyone can suffer from sunburn after being in the sun for a long time. Whatever your skin colour, you should

wear sun protection creams to protect against sunburn. Respect your skin and use a high factor sun cream (factor 15 minimum, but ideally higher).

Make-up

For some people, wearing cosmetics can make them feel confident as well as look good. (But remember that some schools have a ban on pupils wearing make-up.)

You can now buy make-up for many different skin tones. Choose ones that are close to your skin colour. These will complement rather than change the colour of your face.

Applying make-up is not always easy for some people. Ask a cosmetic consultant (usually found at cosmetic counters in places like Boots) about the best colour for you and for help if you are not sure how to apply make-up. You can

also ask for free samples! To maintain good healthy skin always make sure you wash your face and moisturise your skin every morning, and night before bed. And always remove make-up before going to bed at night.

Teeth

Having regular dental check-ups is a part of maintaining healthy teeth. It is recommended that you visit a dentist every six months, even if you are not having problems with your teeth, because then a dentist can spot early signs of trouble.

You can register with any dentist in your area. If they take NHS patients, treatment is usually free if you are under 18, in full-time education or pregnant. If you do not have a dentist or you are not happy with the one you have, ask your carer or social worker for help.

Illnesses

There are some medical conditions which mainly affect young people from some ethnic minority communities.

Sickle cell anaemia

This is a blood condition you might inherit if both of your parents are carriers of the sickle cell trait. It makes round red blood cells change to a crescent shape. This causes the cells to become sticky and clump together, leading to blocked blood vessels. This, in turn, can cause severe pain and is called a 'sickling crisis'. There are different treatments available to prevent or relieve symptoms of sickle cell anaemia. There is

a simple test you can get to see if you have inherited the sickle cell trait from a parent. Ask your doctor.

Find out more...

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Sickle-cell-anaemia
www.sickleandthal.org.uk
www.sicklecellsociety.org



Beta thalassaemia

This is a blood condition where the body cannot create enough red blood cells. The condition can be detected when a baby is around four months old. It requires intensive medical care, including regular blood transfusions. Bone marrow transplantation is an option for a few. There is a simple test you can get to see if you have inherited the beta thalassaemia trait from a parent. Ask your doctor.

Find out more...

www.nhs.uk/conditions/thalassaemia
www.sickleandthal.org.uk
www.ukts.org



Other conditions to know about

Diabetes

People of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin are three to five times more likely to have diabetes than white people.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/diabetes

Lupus

This is an incurable immune system illness, which causes pain and tiredness. It affects mainly women, and is more common in those of African, South Asian and Chinese origin. It can be triggered by puberty.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/lupus

Fibroids and Polycystic ovary syndrome

Fibroids are benign (non-cancerous) tumours that grow in or around the womb (uterus). At least one in four women develops them at some stage in their life and they tend to be more common in women who are of African-Caribbean origin.

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a condition in which women typically have a number of small cysts around the edge of their ovaries (polycystic ovaries). Many women with PCOS are overweight but it can also run in families.

If you are worried about your periods or are they are unusually light or irregular speak to a doctor or nurse.

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Fibroids/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/polycystic-ovarian-syndrome/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Cardiovascular disease

Heart disease is up to 40 per cent higher in Asian men and women than in the white population; and it's important to be aware of what you can do to prevent it from a young age. The most important things are a balanced diet, regular physical activity and not smoking or drinking.

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Atherosclerosis

Chewing paan

This is common in South Asia and other parts of the world, but some of the things you chew – such as tobacco and areca nut – can cause mouth cancer.

http://rdoc.org.uk/areca_betel_nut.html
(Mouth Cancer Foundation)

Vitiligo

This is where the skin loses its pigment in patches. Anyone can get it but on darker skin it is more noticeable. This can be very upsetting and make people question their identity. Although there is no cure yet, there are treatments available that can slow the spread of vitiligo and help the skin regain its colour.

www.vitiligosociety.org.uk

Keloids

This is where scars grow lumpy and larger than the wound they are healing. People with dark skin are more likely to have the condition. They are most common between the ages of 10 and 30. If your skin is prone to keloid scarring, it is important to be careful with it – for example, when shaving – to minimise the risk of scarring.

www.nhs.uk/livewell/skin/pages/keloidscarring.aspx

Relationships and sexual health

Relationships aren't just about having a boyfriend or girlfriend. Throughout your life you will have different kinds of relationships – for example with your carer, your school mates and, later in life, your work colleagues.

All relationships have ups and downs. If one of your relationships is going through a rough patch, it might be a good idea to communicate your feelings to the other person. It may not be easy to do, and you might feel scared doing it, but it's very possible the other person is happy that you want to talk about the relationship. You might be surprised at the good that can come from communicating openly with other people.

Everyone has sexual feelings and good sexual health is about being able to understand and

enjoy your sexuality, as well as about understanding issues around sex and how to behave responsibly to prevent unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. It is also about having personal choice – you should be able to choose what kind of sexual relationships you want and with whom. Some people have experienced unwanted or unwelcome sexual contact. This is illegal, and if this is something that has happened to you – even in the past – then you might want to talk to an adult you can trust, or you could try calling the Brook helpline on 0808 802 1234.

As you grow up you might start to fancy people of the same or opposite sex. This is completely normal and you should feel happy with your personal sexual identity. If you are gay or

lesbian, or if you want to have a relationship with someone who is from a different cultural, ethnic or religious community from you, you may be fearful about other people's prejudices or ignorance – but it's important to remember that everyone is sexually and romantically attracted to different kinds of people and you should be free to choose your own relationships.

Sex can be scary and in sexual relationships you should have the confidence and the skills to say no to sex if you are not ready. Remember, it's your body and as a young person you have rights and responsibilities for your sexual health.

- ★ The age of consent for all young people is 16. This means that it is unlawful for anyone to have sex with someone under the age of 16. This law is to protect young people from abuse and exploitation.

- ★ The law does recognise that having sex is part of young people's lives. It is unlikely that action will be taken against two young people of a similar age and understanding who have agreed to have a sexual relationship.
- ★ All young people – including those under 16 – have the right to confidential advice and information about relationships, safe sex, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- ★ If the doctor thinks you understand the information and advice you have asked for then he or she can give you treatment, including contraception, without your parent or carer knowing. If you are thinking about having sex, get advice and information first, so that you know how to keep yourself safe, and if you can, try to talk to an adult you trust.

>>> See www.brook.org.uk and the directory at the back of this book for lots more information on the topics above.



Contraception

You use contraception to avoid getting pregnant. There are many types, some of which are more common than others. Have a look at the list below and see if you've heard of them all. If you haven't and you want to know more, have a look at www.brook.org.uk

- ★ Condom for males
- ★ Pill
- ★ Contraceptive injection
- ★ IUD (intrauterine device)
- ★ Sterilisation
- ★ Condom for females
- ★ Coil (IUD/IUS)
- ★ Contraceptive patch

- ★ Cap and spermicide
- ★ Contraceptive implant
- ★ Vaginal ring

All contraceptives aim to stop you getting pregnant. Condoms (both those for males and those for females) also stop the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in many – but not all – circumstances (see 'Sexually transmitted infections' below).

If you have had sex without using contraception, or you are worried that your contraception has failed, 'emergency contraception' can be used to help prevent an unwanted pregnancy up to five days after sex. There are two types: the emergency contraceptive pill and the emergency intrauterine device (IUD).

>>> Remember, all contraception is free on the NHS – you can get it from a family planning clinic, your GP, a Brook Centre or some young people's services and some chemists. If you are under 16 then a doctor, nurse or health worker can prescribe you contraception if they believe you have enough understanding of the decision you are making.

Sexually transmitted infections

Often called 'STIs', these are infections that can be caught or passed on when you have sex or close sexual contact with another person.

Some infections – like **chlamydia**, **syphilis** or **gonorrhoea** – can be spread by having penetrative sex without a condom ('unprotected sex') or through having oral sex (kissing, licking or sucking someone's genitals). They are bacterial infections and need to be treated with antibiotics. But often – especially with chlamydia – there are no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection. Most infections can be treated quickly and easily in

the early stages but if you leave it too long they could affect your health. Tests are very simple and you can have one at a GP surgery, a family planning clinic or a sexual health clinic.

Genital warts and **herpes** can be spread through skin-to-skin contact as well as through penetrative or oral sex. Condoms are not always effective in preventing these STIs.

HIV stands for Human Immuno-deficiency Virus. It can be passed on through penetrative sex without a condom; infected needles used for injecting drugs; from mother to baby during

pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding; or through infected blood received by blood transfusion. You cannot get the virus by sharing cups, sharing food, hugging or kissing.

Having HIV makes it harder for your body to fight infections and can lead to a combination of serious medical problems, which may be referred to as AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). There is no cure for HIV. However, there are drugs that can reduce the

amount of the virus in your body to very low levels. This means that in many cases the condition can be managed.

The term 'AIDS' refers to the point when a person's immune system can no longer cope because of the damage caused by HIV and they start to get one or more specific illnesses, such as cancer or pneumonia. The term is now rarely used – it is more common to talk of later-stage or advanced HIV infection.

Pregnancy

An unplanned or unwanted pregnancy can be particularly stressful for a young person. If you have had sex without contraception in the last few days, you could still avoid becoming pregnant by using emergency contraception as soon as possible.

If you think you might be pregnant there is support available, whether or not you want to continue with the pregnancy, from organisations and helplines such as Brook or Sexwise (see page 43 for details). Support is also available for young men who are fathers or whose partners become pregnant.

Alcohol and other drugs

A drug is any substance that changes the way you think or feel. Drugs can be illegal, like cannabis; or legal, like alcohol or cigarettes. Doctors or nurses also prescribe a range of drugs for medical use.

Though it may sometimes feel that everyone is using some type of drug, that is not the case.

Surveys show that if a class was filled with 100 people aged 11–15:

- ★ 88 will not have tried cannabis
- ★ 42 will never have had an alcoholic drink.

Peer pressure

Other people – for example, friends at school – might pressure you into smoking or drinking when you don't really want to. Knowing how you feel about drinking and smoking is a major step in handling pressure like this.

It's absolutely OK – no matter what anybody else says – to respect yourself and your personal beliefs enough to say *No* when you're offered a drink, drugs or a cigarette. If someone's pressuring you to use drugs or to have a drink, ask yourself if they're really a friend at all.

Nicotine

Lots of young people start to smoke cigarettes because they are curious or because they like the idea of doing something adults don't want them to do. Some people may think that smoking cigarettes looks cool, but it:

- ★ makes your clothes and breath stink
- ★ discolours your teeth
- ★ costs money that you could spend on music or clothes
- ★ gives you coughs and colds and stops you keeping up with your friends at sports
- ★ can damage the health of people who breathe in the smoke that you exhale
- ★ can cause severe long-term damage to your health, including lung disease, heart disease and cancer.

Alcohol

Drinking and purchasing alcohol if you are aged under 18 is illegal in the United Kingdom. But many young people drink anyway, either because they're curious about how it will make them feel or because they think they will have fun. But drinking can also make people violent, damage property or hurt other people.

Alcohol slows down your body's responses to things. Drinking too much can make you slur

your words, lose your balance, forget things or vomit. Some young people drink so much they become unconscious and have to be taken to hospital.



Cannabis

Cannabis is illegal and you can be arrested (even if you are 17 or under) if you:

- ★ are smoking in public
- ★ have previously offended or been given a warning
- ★ are close to schools or other youth premises
- ★ let other people use or supply drugs at your house ('supplying' includes giving illegal drugs to a friend).

>>> See www.talktofrank.com for lots more information and advice on the topics below.

Someone who has smoked cannabis might giggle a lot, have red or bloodshot eyes, or even go to sleep very easily.

Cannabis might seem fun the first few times you try it, but using it over a longer period of time might mean:

- ★ loss of motivation to go to school or college
- ★ significant damage to your lungs – cannabis has four times as many dangerous chemicals (called 'carcinogens') as cigarettes
- ★ a greater risk of developing mental illnesses later in life.

Class A drugs

Class A drugs are treated by the law as the most dangerous. They include heroin, cocaine and crack, all of which are highly addictive and can be fatal if you overdose. Other Class A drugs are ecstasy, LSD and magic mushrooms.

If you are caught with a Class A drug (whether it's for you or for a friend), you could face up to seven years in prison or an unlimited fine or both.

Legal highs

'Legal Highs' is a word sometimes used to describe new types of drugs such as mephedrone and BZP. Don't be fooled by the label: just because it's marketed as a 'legal high', doesn't mean it is. New laws from the government mean people caught with these substances could face the same penalties as those for any Class B drugs.

Also, there is little or no research about their short or long-term effects, so users are potentially putting their mental and physical health at risk. Strengths can vary and the risks can increase further when these drugs are used with any other substances, including alcohol.

Section 2

Your identity

Positive identity

Having a positive sense of identity and self-image is important to help us think well of ourselves, be happy and build self-esteem.

Feeling confused about your identity as a young person is a common experience.

We develop our identity by learning from others: parents, brothers, sisters, care staff, foster carers, teachers, friends and others around us. What we see on television, films and the internet, and read in books, newspapers and magazines, also influences the way we think about ourselves. As there are so many ways of learning about who we are, it's helpful to think of our identity as something that changes throughout our lives.

If you have been brought up with a family or in a situation where your carers do not share your birth culture or ethnicity, there may be times when you will probably feel alone or different.

It is all right to be different – everybody is – whether you're talking about skin colour, lifestyle, religious beliefs or the way you dress. Some young people might be self-conscious and feel 'different' in a bad way. But it is really important not to feel bad or down about this, as you may begin to feel bad about yourself as a whole person.

There are plenty of ways to build your understanding of who you are and to learn about your culture and heritage, as well as to work out how you feel about things. This will help you build self-confidence and feel proud of the struggles that people from ethnic minority groups have endured to achieve many positive and great things in history and today (see page 45 for a list of inspiring role models).

Culture and ethnicity

Ethnicity and culture are words used to describe groups of people who share elements of their identity and can identify with one another.

Not everyone within an ethnic group or culture is the same. Cultures and ethnicities are full of

differences: different abilities (mental and physical); different ages (older people may have different views to younger people); different genders (men and women); different religions (for example Muslim, Jewish, Christian); and

different sexual orientation (same-sex or opposite-sex attraction).

Within each of these groups people can be wealthy or poor, traditional or free-thinking, fat or thin.

This means we have the opportunity to learn about different ways of life, different faiths and festivals and to celebrate our common humanity. Ways you can build your understanding of who you are include the following.

- ★ **Appreciate your colour:** It is wrong to compare one type of beauty to another based on the colour of a person's skin. No one has the right to devalue or place value on a person because of their colour.
- ★ **Appreciate your culture:** Your culture includes the food, music, traditional dress, religious background and history you share with others from your ethnic or religious group. If you are scared about asking questions, try reading or visiting websites that will help you trace your cultural history. Take a look in the directory at the back of this book for more information.
- ★ **Meet with other young people:** Connecting with others who have shared similar experiences will help you to feel less isolated.

★ **Make contacts in the community:**

Depending on where you live, there are likely to be meeting places, activities and people who will help you find out about ethnic minority communities in your area. If you feel you can't make the first contact, ask an adult or another young person to make the arrangements for you.

There will be times when you will experience things that are hurtful, like people judging you because of your ethnicity. This is discrimination or racism – and it is wrong. Being proud of your ethnicity, and not letting people tell you otherwise, is an important way of overcoming this kind of prejudice.

It will also help you to have a sense of pride in the knowledge of the richness of your identity.



Positive learning

There are many ways to increase your knowledge about your culture and background

– and those of others. For example you can read books, listen to music or appreciate art.

Reading

Books, newspapers and magazines can provide a positive link to learning about people, history, music and the world around us. Reading can widen your knowledge.

Equally, there are reading materials which may present negative messages and images of people from many groups. These messages may be racist, sexist and discriminatory.

In today's multicultural society there are many books, newspapers and magazines that reflect and respect diverse cultures, ethnicities and

religious backgrounds. Newspapers and magazines – like *The Asian Times*, *The Voice*, *Caribbean Times*, *Ebony*, *Pride* and many more – can help you keep up to date on issues of interest to you from around the country and the world.

There are many books written about the lives and history of people from ethnic minority groups. Some are poems, some are novels or stories and some are factual books. You can find them in libraries and shops.

>>> You can improve your reading skills by trying different books; you may wish to start writing yourself. Take a look in the directory for some starting points.

Music

Music plays a central role in all cultures. It is often a way for young people to express themselves. Music is also incredibly diverse; the selection provided here is just a taster of what is out there. You can find much more on CDs and MP3 files. There are also many internet radio stations you can listen to for free.

Hindi: This genre covers Bollywood film music and 'Indi-pop', the common name for Indian pop music. It uses traditional and modern instruments, and melodies and styles that draw on Indian folk and classical music.

Bhangra: This is a lively form of dance that originated in the Punjab region of the

Himalayan Subcontinent. It also refers to a popular type of music that originated in the UK, and incorporates Punjabi influences. Today, in pop music, bhangra means mixing traditional Punjabi beats and drum sounds with other western instruments.

Reggae: This is a slow, relaxed style of music, developed in Jamaica in the 1960s. It is associated with the Rastafarian movement, which influenced many musicians including Bob Marley. Reggae is built on the same musical foundations as drumming and chanting, which is called *nyahbinghi*. Through reggae, Rastafarians sing about their beliefs and the social conditions they live in.

Hip-hop: Started by African-American and Latino people in New York in the 1970s, hip-hop is made up of emceeing (rapping) and DJing. The roots of hip-hop are in west African music. The music style of some travelling singers and poets in Africa is very similar to hip-hop.

Soul: Soul music has its roots in gospel and rhythm and blues music. Many consider soul music to have begun in Chicago, created by African-Americans.

Gospel: Gospel music is rooted in the Christian church in the United States, where it was developed by the African-American community during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is now a popular commercial genre.

R&B: Rhythm and blues (R&B) was pioneered by African-Americans in the 1940s. It has been used to describe many different styles of music since then – from blues through to rock and roll, and most recently a mixture of soul, funk and dance also known as ‘contemporary R&B’.

>>> Take a look in the directory to find out about some popular artists who are good examples of these different styles of music.

Racism and your rights

Racism is wrong. Racism can be felt in many ways: name calling; teasing you about your ethnicity, accent or skin colour; or even physical assault. Extreme cases of racism are classed as hate crimes and have serious consequences.

All young people have the right to grow up in an environment that is free from racism, prejudice, discrimination and harassment.

Young people who grow up feeling inferior because of their gender, skin colour, hair, language, ability, disability or family background may not always achieve as much as they could have. Like everyone else, they need to feel good about themselves. Growing up in a society where some people from ethnic minority groups are portrayed negatively in the media or by some adults can have a bad effect on self-image and confidence.

It is important to know how to deal with racism and discrimination when faced with it.

Building self-confidence about who you are as an individual will help you to deal with people who are negative towards you because of your gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs or culture.

People caring for you or supporting you may find it hard to know what to do about racist incidents. This may be because they:

- ★ feel embarrassed or helpless
- ★ don't realise that what has happened is a racist incident
- ★ do not realise how important it is to deal with it
- ★ may have racist views themselves
- ★ may not want to make a big deal about it.

None of these reasons is helpful if you are on the receiving end of racism!

If things are not dealt with as soon as they happen it can make you feel bad. It can also make the person who has treated you in a racist way believe that it is OK to behave this way and that nobody is going to say or do anything about it.

You should always tell someone you trust if someone is being racist towards you. If you have asked the person you tell to do something about it and they do nothing then there are other people who can help you.

>>> See the directory pages for help and more information.

Section 3:

Exploring different cultures & religions

This section is about the heritage of some of the main cultural and religious groups in the UK today. It's a very short introduction to some very big topics – so we might have missed out some things that you think are really important. But we hope that it's a starting point for you, your friends or your carers to go and find out more.

When we are talking about a shared culture, we are referring to the things that a group of people share and which give them a recognised identity. It can include things like religion, values, food, clothing, festivals and other aspects of the way that people live their lives.

Developing a better understanding about people's culture helps to reduce negative views, ignorance, and prejudice.

Although there are several things that make up a group's culture, not everyone from that group may practise all these customs.

For example, the foods listed in this section are meant to give you just a 'flavour' of traditional food – they are not the only popular foods. Also in the sections on clothing, just because some types of clothing are worn by a particular group doesn't mean that everyone from that group lives that way. The way young people dress is often a reflection of their own personal identity and their identification with a peer group, sport, fashion trend or type of music. They may choose not to wear the clothing traditionally associated with their culture, and to dress like other young people around them, perhaps maintaining some basic aspects of their culture, for example not showing their legs or arms.

Choosing a religion

Whatever ethnic community you are from, what you believe in is your personal choice. You do not have to follow any particular religion and are free to choose your own.

You may decide that you do not believe in any religions and that is fine too. Many people in the UK are secular (non-religious), including the following.

- ★ Atheists do not have a belief in a God (or Gods)
- ★ Agnostics believe that the ultimate truth of existence (including any Gods) is unknown or unknowable
- ★ Humanists do not believe in any Gods. They think that we can make sense of the world using reason, experience and shared human values and that we can live good lives without religious beliefs.

To find out more about Humanism visit www.humanism.org.uk

African-Caribbean

African-Caribbean people are historically of African origin but have migrated to Britain from the Caribbean Islands. African-Caribbean people have lived in Britain for a long time but many came during and after the second world war when residents of countries of the Commonwealth – like Jamaica and Barbados – fought for Britain and settled here afterwards, or were encouraged to come to Britain to help fill shortages in the labour market. Some people of African-Caribbean origin prefer to be called Afro-Caribbean or Black British.

Religion: Christianity is the dominant religion among African-Caribbean people, a religion which believes that Jesus is the son of God and that you should strive to follow him in your everyday actions. Many will follow other religions (or no religion). For example, Rastafarianism originated in Jamaica (see box).

In the UK, the Black Christian movement is very diverse. An estimated 400,000 people of African and African-Caribbean origin regularly attend church – many at traditional denominations such as the Church of England, Methodist and Baptist churches, and others at Pentecostal and new independent churches.

Food: Traditional Caribbean diets vary. Maize, yams, cassava, beans and rice, are often eaten as part of a meal. Herbs and spices are generally used in most foods. Hot sauces, hot peppers and other flavourings may also be used for some dishes. A Caribbean diet may consist of:



- ★ starchy fruits like yam, sweet potato, cassava, dasheen, green banana, plantain and breadfruit
- ★ cereals and grains such as rice, cornmeal, wheat and oats
- ★ peas, beans (often referred to as peas – see recipe below) and nuts
- ★ dark green/leafy and yellow vegetables, including pumpkin, carrots, kale, callaloo, dasheen leaves and spinach
- ★ fruits, such as mangoes, pineapples, pawpaw and bananas.

Rastafari

The Rastafari movement developed in Jamaica in the 1930s, following the coronation of Haile Selassie I as King of Ethiopia in 1930. Rastafarians believe Haile Selassie is an incarnation of God and that people of African origin living outside Africa are living in exile as the result of colonisation and the slave trade. Their beliefs are based on the ideas of Marcus Garvey, a political activist who wanted to improve the status of African and African-Caribbean people. There are approximately one million worldwide followers of Rastafari as a faith.

The 2001 census found 5,000 Rastafarians living in England and Wales. Some Rastafarians may use marijuana as part of their religious practice, in the belief that it increases spiritual awareness. They follow strict dietary laws with a strong emphasis on vegetables. They do not drink alcohol.

Rastafarians grow their hair into dreadlocks, which represent power, freedom and defiance, and symbolise strength within one's self. Rastafarians usually keep their heads covered. Women will usually wear their hair in a colourful wrap or crown, while men usually wear hats called tams to keep their hair covered.

African

There are records of people from Africa settling in Britain since the middle of the 16th century. This was not always of their free will – during the 17th and 18th centuries, Britain was involved in the slave trade and some Africans came to Britain because they had been captured to be attendants to sea captains or officials. Other periods of migration were after the Napoleonic wars, and the first and second

world wars, when small groups of West Africans arrived as wartime workers, servicemen and merchant seamen. Others have arrived since, from countries such as Nigeria and Ghana – both of which were former British colonies – to work and study. Since the outbreak of civil war in Somalia in the late 1980s, many people from the country have fled to Britain and other countries seeking refuge.

Ghanaian

Religion: The majority of Ghanians are Christians. There are also significant numbers who follow Islam and traditional African religions. The north of the country is predominantly Islamic and the south mainly Christian.

Food: Thick soups are the mainstay of Ghanaian cuisine and are usually eaten with potatoes or rice. Another staple meal is *fufu*, which consists of cassava, yam or plantain (from the banana family) that has been cooked, pureed and mashed into a ball. Fufu is traditionally made with cassava but it can be made with anything,

even instant mashed potato! A popular dessert is fried plantains seasoned with chilli pepper and ginger. A common food served on ceremonial occasions is *oto*, made with mashed yams. It is always accompanied by hard-boiled eggs. Ghana's most famous export is cocoa – used to make chocolate.

Clothing: The most famous cloth is called *kente*, which comes from the word *kenten*, meaning 'basket'. The Asante people also refer to *kente* as *nwentoma* or 'woven cloth'. *Kente* is identified by its dazzling, multi-coloured

patterns of bright colours, geometric shapes and bold designs. It is a royal and sacred cloth. *Kente* was the cloth of kings, but over time its use has become more widespread. Its importance has remained and it is held in high esteem throughout Ghana. Women usually wear very colourful wrap skirts. Colour is an essential element of every woman's outfit. *Adinkera* is a highly valued hand-printed and hand-embroidered cloth. *Adinkera* means farewell, or good bye, so the cloth is used on funeral occasions.

Somalian

Religion: Around 99 per cent of people in Somalia are Muslims (read more about Islam in the Pakistan section on page 26).

Food: Southern Somali food is rich in green vegetables, corn and beans. The Northern Somali diet is heavier in milk, rice and meat, because the people who live there are nomadic (meaning that they move around the country a lot).

Clothing: Married women are expected to cover their bodies including their hair. Some Somali women wear veils to cover their faces. Trousers are not a generally accepted form of attire for women, but may be worn under a skirt. Traditional clothing for a man is called a *maawis*. This is a colourful sheet of cloth wrapped around the waist on hot afternoons. The snug-fitting hat that men wear is a *qofe*.

Nigerian

Religion: Most people in Nigeria are either Muslim or Christian.

Food: *Tuwo*, made from maize, is popular; as are *efo*, a vegetable soup, and *isi-ewu*, a goat-head pepper soup. Peppery stews are common in southern Nigeria, while grain and beef are common in the north. Palm oil is the main oil used for cooking. Snack foods include fried yam chips, meat pastries and fried plantains.

Clothing: Nigerian women often wear a *buba*, which is a loose-neck blouse, usually with long sleeves, that is long enough to go a little past the waist. The bottom half of the outfit is called the *iro*. Unfolded, it looks like a plain rectangular

sheet, but when worn it is wrapped around the waist, and folded to stay in place. The head piece is called the *gele*, a scarf that can be folded or tied in a variety of different ways.

Men often wear a *buba too*, but the male version is usually long enough to go halfway down the thighs. The pants or trousers of the male outfit is called the *sokoto*. The outfit is topped off with the *fila* – a round cap for the head.

On festive occasions, men wear *agbada* over their *buba* and *sokoto*. The *agbada* is a wide-armed piece of clothing, usually with a V-shaped neck, which is long enough to reach the floor. The arms are so long that they need to be bunched together when worn.

South Asian

South Asia is made up of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The modern day map of the region was created in 1947, in an event known as 'partition' (see box below). In broad terms, India was formed out of the regions that were mainly Hindu; and Pakistan and Bangladesh out of regions that were mainly Muslim. During the process of partition, millions of people

moved between India and Pakistan to live with people of their religion. Many people lost their homes and others decided to flee to other countries because they did not feel safe. The majority of South Asian people living in the UK are people who came from the region following partition; and from parts of East Africa during the 1960s and early 1970s; and their descendants.

Partition in 1947

From the 18th century up until 1947, the region of South Asia was colonised by Britain (as well as other countries such as France and Portugal, both before and during this period). Independence movements representing Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs eventually led the British Government to withdraw from the region and pass the Indian Independence Act of 1947, creating India, East Pakistan and West Pakistan.

The areas of East Pakistan and West Pakistan were separated by nearly 1,000 miles of Indian territory. In 1971, East Pakistan became Bangladesh, after they fought a war for independence. West Pakistan became modern day Pakistan.

During the process of partition, communities became divided along religious lines, people lost their lives and others had to flee their homes. Many of the issues still resonate today.

India

Religion: Hinduism is the main religion of India, and is also practised by many in other countries, such as the UK and Sri Lanka. More than 13 per cent of the population is Muslim and around 2 per cent, Sikh, the majority of whom live in the Punjab region (see box).

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world. Hindus believe in one supreme being, although there are many different gods who represent different qualities and aspects of this being. Hindus believe in dharma (ethics and

duties), samsara (the continuing cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth), karma (actions, subsequent reactions and consequences) and *moksha* (liberation from samsara). In the UK, Hindus are the third largest religious group, after Christians and Muslims.

Food: A vegetarian diet is common in India as a large number of Hindus do not eat meat because of their attitude to life and their belief that all living things are sacred. Strict Hindus do not eat beef as they believe that the cow is a

sacred animal; they also observe rules around cleanliness when handling and preparing food, and before and after mealtimes.

Milk, butter and cheese are considered pure food. Pork is considered to be unclean and not generally eaten. Common foods include wheat cakes (chapatti); rice; peas, beans, lentils and other vegetables; milk, and curd (yoghurt); ghee (clarified butter); and fruit. Vegetables are often prepared as a curry dish.

Clothing: Some women wear *saris* and some wear *shalwar kameez* – both are traditional Hindu dress. The traditional outfit for men is a tunic or jacket with buttons down the front and a 'Nehru' collar, and the trousers are generally quite loose. Men may also wear a *dhoti* – a long piece of unstitched cloth which is draped about the waist and the legs, and knotted at the waist. In the UK, Hindu men generally wear western clothes.

Sikhism

Sikhs follow the teaching of ten leaders called gurus. There is a special emphasis on the belief that there is only one God and that all humans are equal regardless of caste, colour, religion and, most of all, gender. Community service is very important. Sikhs are expected to share their wealth with the community and practise charity. Religious worship usually takes place in a gurdwara, an otherwise ordinary building except for a triangular orange flag. To show respect in all gurdwaras, people remove their footwear and ensure their heads are covered when they enter.

The five main religious symbols of male Sikhism are known in English as the five Ks, which stand for the *kesh* (uncut hair and beard), *kanga* (wooden comb), *kara* (steel bangle), *kirpan* (a small dagger) and *kaccha* (undergarment or shorts).

Sikhs will not eat meat that is prepared by ritual killing, like Halal meat, as Sikhs do not believe in rituals. They generally do not eat beef or pork. A typical Sikh evening meal consists of rotis, yoghurts, lentils and vegetable curry.

Pakistan

Religion: The majority of people in Pakistan (around 96 per cent) are Muslim. There are also small groups of Sikhs, Christians and others.

A Muslim is a follower of Islam (which literally means 'submission' or surrender of the self to God). They believe in God (Allah) and all the prophets (the last of whom was the Prophet Muhammad) and follow the teaching of the Holy Koran or Qu'ran. The Koran or Qu'ran is the central religious text and is used for worship

five times a day, at dawn, early afternoon, mid-afternoon, after sunset and nightfall. When Muslims refer to Allah, they are referring to God. Muslims do not have pictures, statues or idols of God in any shape or form. Before praying, all Muslims must perform a ritual act of purification, called *wadu*, which involves cleaning parts of the body. Prayers are always said facing Mecca, the holy city, which is in Saudi Arabia. A Muslim in Britain would turn to the southeast for

prayers. Friday is the Muslim holy day when prayers are said at the mosques. Hajj (or Hadj, journey to the holy place) is a pilgrimage to Mecca, usually undertaken once in a lifetime.

Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar. It is very important for Muslims and is considered the most blessed and spiritually beneficial month. It is the month when Muslims do not eat or drink from dawn until dusk. This is known as 'fasting'. The main reason for fasting is that it is commanded in the Koran or Qu'ran. It is also believed to teach self-control and be a reminder of the suffering of people in the world who do not have enough to eat. The Koran or Qu'ran also states that women have equal rights to men.

There are many followers of Islam around the world. For example, while many Muslims in Britain are from Pakistan and Bangladesh, others are from European countries such as Kosovo and Bosnia. They came to Britain as refugees following the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s.

Bangladesh

Religion: Around 90 per cent of the Bangladeshi population is Muslim (read more about Islam in the Pakistan section on page 26), and the remaining 10 per cent, mostly Hindu (read more about Hinduism in the India section on page 25).

Food: Within Pakistan, the style of food varies from region to region. However, most people observe Islamic customs. For example,

Muslims will only eat Halal meat – which means that it must come from animals that are killed and prepared according to Islamic law. This includes foods that contain animal by-products (for example cheese, which contains a substance called rennet which usually comes from animals). Muslims do not eat pork. The main course often contains meat and is usually served with naan bread or rice.



The crescent moon is the symbol of Islam

Clothing: Muslim women in Pakistan traditionally wear a *shalwar kameez* and *dupatta*. The kameez is a long, loose shirt with long or short sleeves and the shalwar are long, loose trousers. The dupatta is a long scarf worn over the shoulder and across the front. This is because Muslims are required to dress modestly. *Hijab* means 'covering' and many Muslim women will wear some type of hijab.

Food: Rice, chickpeas and lentils are staple foods, and a wide range of spices are used. Seafood is more common in the south of the country, which is near the sea; while meat is more common in and around the capita city of

Dhaka. In other areas, many people eat a vegetarian diet.

Clothing: The most common dress for women is the sari – a long length of material draped around the body with a formation of front pleats and worn over a long petticoat and blouse. In

urban areas, some women wear Western clothes. Western clothing is more common among men, though on religious occasions they may wear 'kurta-pajama' (a long shirt over loose trousers) or the 'lungi', a long piece of fabric wrapped around the lower body.

Chinese

The British Chinese community is the largest in Europe and thought to be the oldest Chinese community in western Europe. Most British-born Chinese people are descended from people who had already left China and settled in another country before they came to Britain – mostly former British colonies such as Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore.

Religion: The ancient religion of China was Buddhism, which was introduced in the first century. In the early part of the twentieth century, religious practice was suppressed by the Chinese government. Although the government is still officially atheist (no religion), it now recognises five religions: Buddhism (see box), Taoism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism.

Festivals: These are celebrated by Chinese people across the world. Chinese New Year lasts for 15 days, with each day representing something special. The festival begins on the first day of the first lunar month in the Chinese

calendar. Each year is represented by an animal, giving special qualities to people born in that year.

Food: Chinese food tends to be very healthy because of the low levels of fat and dairy used and the emphasis on rice and fresh vegetables. The main cooking utensil used by Chinese people is the wok, a round iron pan used for shallow frying and steaming food. Chopsticks are often used instead of knives and forks.

Clothing: Chinese women traditionally wear a *cheongsam*, which simply means 'long dress'. In parts of China it is known as *qipao*. The cheongsam's neck is high, collar closed, and its sleeves may be either short, medium or full length, depending on season and taste. The dress is buttoned on the right side, with a loose chest, a fitted waist and slits up the sides.

Men will sometimes wear a Chinese tunic suit, known in China as the *zhongshan* suit. It has a turn-down collar, four buttons and four pockets.

Buddhism

Buddhism literally means 'enlightened one', and is the title given to Prince Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. There is no god in Buddhism. The focus is on personal spiritual development and enlightenment rather than worship of a god. Because of this, some people describe it as a philosophy rather than a religion.

Buddhists practise at home or at a temple. At a temple, they may listen to monks chanting from ancient texts and take part in meditation and discussion. The core belief system is based around the removal of suffering. Buddhists believe that there is a cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth. Unless someone gains Enlightenment, when they die they will be reborn.

Vietnamese

The population of Vietnamese people living in the UK was established after many people left Vietnam in the years after 1975, following the fall of the city of Saigon to a Communist regime.

Religion: Buddhism has the strongest presence in Vietnam (see box on page 28), though some people belong to other religions such as Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam.

Food: Grain foods feature prominently in Vietnamese food. Rice is the most popular grain and can be ground into rice flour to make noodles and rice paper. Common vegetables include cabbage, garlic, spring onions, carrots, bell peppers, tomatoes, bamboo shoots, cucumbers and mushrooms. Popular fruits include mangoes, pineapples and mandarins. Bean curd (tofu) and soy beans are used in many

traditional dishes. Shrimp, crab, squid, mussels and countless varieties of fish are eaten as well. Pork is popular but chicken is more widely eaten.

Clothing: The traditional Vietnamese dress is an *ao dai* (pronounced 'oh yai'). The *ao dai* for women consists of a long flowing dress with a split-panel skirt and a pair of loose-fitted pants. The *ao dai* dress has a form-fitting bodice (top) with long sleeves. Attached to the bodice is a long skirt and the length can be anywhere from below the knee to the floor. The neckline can either be a boat neck (a simple curve below the neck) or a stiff Mandarin collar.

The *ao dai* for men is shorter and does not have split panels. The *ao dai* top for men ends around the knees. The collar is a Mandarin collar and the colours are dark.

Polish

The Polish community in Britain is made up of people from Poland who have settled in the UK, and their descendants. Most came here after one of two major events, the second world war (when many Polish soldiers fought with Britain against Nazi troops) and the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, when Poland became a member of the EU.

Religion: The vast majority of Poles are Roman Catholic (which is a branch of Christianity); with

smaller numbers of other Christian faiths, such as Protestant and Eastern Orthodox.

Food: Potatoes are a staple food in the Polish diet. Potato pancakes and potato cutlets are both popular. Meat of all kinds is eaten with spices, as well as with different kinds of noodles and dumplings. Pierogi are dumplings made of dough that are stuffed with different fillings and then boiled or baked. Sauerkraut, beetroot soup and sausages are also fairly common.

Romany

The Romany are an ethnic group living mostly in Europe who trace their origins to medieval India. The first communities settled in the UK

over 500 years ago, while some arrived more recently from eastern Europe.

Religion: Romany people usually adopt the main religion of the country in which they live, while still keeping some aspects of their own belief systems. Most eastern European Roma are Christian (in particular Roman Catholic or Orthodox Christian) or Muslim (read more about Islam in the Pakistan section on page 26). Those in western Europe and the United States are mostly Catholic or Protestant (another branch of Christianity). In Turkey, Egypt and the southern Balkans, the Roma are split into Christian and Muslim populations. Over the past 50 years, Roma have become ministers and created their own churches and missionary organisations.

Formal religion is often supplemented by faith in the supernatural, in omens and curses. Roma believe in their powers and use curses, called *amria*, and healing rituals. Good luck charms, amulets and talismans are common among Roma. They are carried to prevent misfortune or heal sickness.

Food: Traditional Romany recipes are easy to make, can feed lots of people and use

ingredients that are readily available – for example wild fruits, berries, leafy plants, molluscs and small mammals. Lunch is often not eaten, and dinner is served at sunset. Sometimes the food is on the stove all afternoon, so people can eat whenever they are hungry. The basic element of this dinner is a hearty vegetable soup or stew, containing potatoes, rice or pasta. Some tribes sometimes serve maize cakes instead of bread. Rabbit and game fowl are enjoyed when possible. Garlic is a very commonly used seasoning. Sometimes meat is served, generally broiled or cooked on a spit.

Clothing: In the UK many men and women, particularly the younger generation, will wear western clothes. Traditionally a woman's legs must not show – so long, full skirts are worn. These skirts are generally of bright colours, often consisting of many layers. Among many communities, a married woman will keep her head covered with a *diklo*, or headscarf. Women usually allow their hair to grow long. Their hair may then be braided or rolled into a bun on the back of the head. Roma women usually wear jewellery.

Jewish

The Jewish population in the UK is the second largest in western Europe and the seventh largest worldwide. The first records of Jewish people living in the UK date from the 11th century. In the 1930s and 1940s, Jewish people in Germany, Austria, Poland and Italy were persecuted by fascist regimes and millions were killed in the holocaust. Some were able to flee to Britain and other countries in western Europe. Not everyone who considers themselves part of the Jewish community will follow the religious aspects of Judaism – it is a word that can apply both to a person's ethnicity or culture, as well as to their religion.

Religion: Judaism is based on the teachings of the Old Testament – the first section of the Bible. The religious teaching is to worship one God, to carry out the Ten Commandments, and to practise charity and tolerance towards other people. Symbols of Judaism include the seven branch candlestick (*menorah*); the six-point star of David; and the skull cap (*yarmulke*) and long-fringed shawl (*tallith*) which are worn, according to gender, during prayers.

The Jewish holy day is called *Shabbat* or the Sabbath, and lasts from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. On Friday night in traditional Jewish households, the table is laid

with a fresh white tablecloth. Two candles in candlesticks are placed on the table, and lit by a woman in the house before the start of the Sabbath. A *kiddush* (a blessing or prayer) is then said. A special ceremony – the *Bar Mitzvah* – is held for Jewish boys when they reach 13, so that they can join in religious ceremonies as an adult. In some communities there is a similar ceremony for girls on their 12th birthday, called a *Bat Mitzvah*.

Food: Practising Jews will only eat foods that are kosher, which means they have been prepared in a particular way in accordance with Jewish laws. A kosher household will keep utensils, crockery and cutlery for meat and milk separate. Any sea creatures with fins and scales are kosher, but those without are not, which means that shellfish is forbidden. To be kosher, meat must be slaughtered in accordance with Jewish law. Pork is totally forbidden.

Beliefs of major world religions

Religion	God	Name	Holy book	Symbol	Place of worship
Buddhist	no belief	none	Tripitaka (which has three main texts)	dharma wheel (among others)	temple
Christian	one god	God	Bible	cross	church
Hindu	one supreme being	a wide range of gods representing different aspects of the supreme being, e.g. Krishna, Vishnu, Siva and Ganesha	Vedas	om (among others)	mandir
Muslim	one god	Allah	Koran or Qu'ran	star and crescent	mosque
Jewish	one god	Yahweh / God	Old Testament	six-point star	synagogue
Sikh	one god	Waheguru	Guru Granth Sahib	khanda	gurdwara

World food list

Bitter gourd (bitter melon): The red and sweet bitter gourd pith is popular in many south Asian salads.

Black-eye peas: Tropical white peas with a black patch. They grow in long pods. Dried peas are available in many countries.

Breadfruit: A large green fruit with rough skin. The round fruit is boiled or roasted. Sliced thinly and fried, it is substituted for bread.

Callaloo: A dish of dasheen or eddoe leaves, okra, salt meat and other seasonings, chopped and simmered together.

Cantonese: A style of cooking that involves part-boiling, steaming and quick stir-frying to retain natural juices and flavours.

Cassava: The sweet variety is boiled. The black and rough-skinned bitter variety is processed and produces cassava flour and starch.

Chocho: A green pear-shaped fruit used as a vegetable.

Congo peas: Green, pigeon or gunga peas. Available dried in many countries.

Dasheen: A large root tuber with a dark-brown rough skin. The flesh is dark and, when cooked, is not quite as tasty as other root vegetables.

Dhal: Lentils made in the form of a thick, soup-like mixture.

Eggplant (aubergine): A dark-skinned fleshy vegetable also known as garden egg.

Fufu: Pounded plantain.

Hakka: A type of Chinese cooking. Baked chicken in salt is a popular dish.

Mango: A tropical fruit with a thick skin, and yellow flesh that is firm and sweet. Available tinned in many countries.

Okra: Also called ladies fingers, they are finger-length green-ribbed and hairy pods that grow profusely.

Pak choy: A dark-green Chinese leaf vegetable used in soups and stir-fries.

Pawpaw: A large melon-like fruit. The thick yellow flesh has a delicious flavour and there are lots of black seeds in the centre.

Plantain: A member of the banana family. The fruit is not eaten raw but cooked when ripe, green or under-ripe.

Puri: A type of bread originating in South Asia. The dough is shaped into small discs and then deep fried, which makes it light and puffy.

Roti or phulka (chapatti): A bread made from wheat flour, it is flat and round.

Shanghai: A regional style of Chinese cooking that involves dicing, shredding and stewing in soya or sesame oil with hot peppers and garlic.

Szechuan: Another regional Chinese style of cooking that is hot and spicy with chillies.

A to Z of festivals

Baisakhi (Vaisakhi): This is a significant festival for Sikhs and Hindus. For Sikhs, the day commemorates Khalsa – the establishment of the Sikh religion in 1699 and the new year. People go to the gurdwara carrying flowers and other offerings. Hindus in some regions also celebrate New Year at this time, and for others the day is a harvest festival, when people buy each other gifts and go to the temple.

Birth of Haile Selassie: This major Rastafarian celebration is celebrated on July 23 with live shows and parties with food. The celebration can last from a whole weekend to a week. New Year in the Rastafarian calendar is on 1 April.

Birthday of Shri

Ramakrishna: This day celebrates the birthday of the 19th century Hindu saint, Shri Ramakrishna, who started the Ramakrishna Vedanta movement.

Bismillah: This Muslim ceremony marks the start of a child's religious training, in which they learn to read the Qu'ran, the holy book.

Carnival: Many African-Caribbean communities celebrate with carnivals. They are rooted in the Caribbean carnivals of the early 19th century, which celebrated the end of slavery and the slave trade. In the UK, the largest carnival is the

Notting Hill Carnival in London. Others include the Leeds Caribbean Carnival.

Christmas: Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph. Festivities often combine a celebration of Jesus' birth with other customs, such as giving presents and having a large family meal.

Diwali: The Hindu festival of light symbolises the victory of good over evil, and lamps are lit as a sign of celebration and hope for humankind. Celebrations focus on traditional lights and lamps. For Hindus in certain regions the day after Diwali is New Year's Day.

Easter: The most important religious feast of the Christian year. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, which Christians believe occurred on the third day following his death by crucifixion. Since its origins, it has been a time of celebration and feasting. Today many people give Easter eggs and chocolates as gifts.

Eid-ul-Fitr: This three-day festival marks the end of the Ramadan fast. *Fitr*

means 'to break the fast'. On the day of the celebration, a typical Muslim family is awake very early. They pray, then eat a small amount, then they may attend special congregational prayers held in mosques, large open areas, stadiums or arenas. After this, family and friends celebrate together and cards are exchanged.



A flamboyant costume at the Notting Hill Carnival, London

Eid-ul-Adha: The 'Celebration of Sacrifices' is the second most important festival in the Muslim calendar. It is celebrated by Muslims worldwide as a commemoration of Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son Ismael for Allah. It marks the end of the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca).

Gurpur: This Sikh festival marks the birth or death anniversary of the gurus.

Hola Mohalla: This is a Sikh alternative to the Hindu festival of Holi and is celebrated in certain parts of Britain. It was started by the tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, as a gathering of Sikhs to reflect on valour and bravery. It is a three-day festival with mock battles followed by music and poetry competitions.

Holi: Known as the Festival of Colours, Holi is celebrated by Hindus at the end of the cool season and the beginning of spring. It is a time for playing practical jokes. People throw brightly coloured powder over each other.

Krishna Janamashtami: This is the birthday of Lord Krishna and is marked by Hindus. Prayers are said through the night, and food is shared after a fast the day before.

Lohri: This Sikh harvest festival is held on January 13 and is celebrated outdoors with a bonfire. It is particularly important for a family that has recently had a birth or marriage.

Pesach – Passover: This Jewish festival begins on the fourteenth day of the Hebrew month of Nisan, and lasts for seven days. It commemorates the exodus from Egypt and the freeing of the children of Israel from slavery. Bitter herbs are eaten to remind the Jewish people of the bitterness of slavery, while apple and nut paste is eaten to remember the bricks used to build the pyramids.

Rosh Hashanah: The Jewish New Year is also the start of a 10-day period when Jewish people reflect on and say sorry for things they have done wrong. The last of those days is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. It is customary to eat sweet food and fruit to signify a sweet and fruitful new year.

Wesak: This is the most important Buddhist festival. It marks the Buddha's birthday, his enlightenment and his death. It is celebrated on the full moon in May. It is a time when Buddhists across the world visit their local temple for celebrations and make offerings of candles, flowers and food.

Yom Kippur: The last of the 10 days of penitence. It is the holiest day in the Jewish calendar and is when Jews ask God to forgive their sins. Jews spend much of the two days in a synagogue, and the ram's horn (shofar) is blown during the service.

**>>> If you want to find out more and see when these – and many other – festivals are celebrated, have a look at this website:
www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/**

Curiosity questions

1 **Why do some older South Asian men have orange-coloured beards?**

Many Muslims – not just those of Asian origin – attach religious importance to colouring hair that is going grey or white. They are only permitted to use natural henna dyes, which turns light hair an orange colour.

2 **Why do some Muslim girls and women wear a headscarf?**

The headscarf is called a hijab. It covers the hair and is worn for modesty, and in many cases it keeps the hair tidy and clean.

3 **Why do Sikhs wear turbans?**

Sikhs wear turbans as a sign of their commitment to their faith, and to manage their hair, as they are forbidden to cut it.

4 **Why is the star of David important to Jewish people?**

It is thought that the star represents the number seven – six star points and the centre – representing the seven names of the angels. It also represents the six days of creation and the seventh day of rest.

5 **Who was Marcus Garvey?**

Marcus Mosiah Garvey was an important part of the Back-to-Africa movement, which encouraged people of African descent to return to their ancestral homelands. This movement eventually inspired other movements, including the Rastafari movement, which proclaims Garvey to be a prophet.

6 **Why do Christians give Easter eggs?**

Easter is very closely related to the Jewish celebration of Passover. At Passover, a hard-boiled egg dipped in salt water symbolises new life and is the Passover sacrifice offered at the temple in Jerusalem.

7 **Where did Roma people originally come from?**

It is thought that the Roma originated in India about 40 generations ago.

8 **Why do Chinese people use so many firecrackers at their festivals?**

In ancient China, bamboo stems were filled with gunpowder and burnt to create small explosions to drive away evil spirits. In modern times, firecrackers have replaced the bamboo stems.



Colourful firecrackers

9 What is karma?

Karma refers to a person's actions and the effects of their actions. It is thought that a person is responsible for their own life and the joy and pain it brings to others.

10 Why do some religions forbid eating pork?

The Old Testament, part of the Bible, and the Koran (Qu'ran) forbid the eating of pork. It is uncertain why pigs are seen as unclean or 'impure', but one theory is that it is because pigs are 'omnivorous' – i.e. they eat both meat and vegetables. This makes them different because most other animals that are commonly eaten by humans do not eat meat.

Section 4

Useful information

School, college and your personal education plan

Having a good education is one of the best starts you can have in life. Depending on where you go to school, you will probably meet people from many different ethnic backgrounds.

You should have a personal education plan that says what your targets are in school, what support you need and who will help you. If you don't have one, then speak to your social worker about it.

It is good practice for schools to have one teacher who has a special responsibility for looking out for, and getting better services for, children and young people who are in care. Find out if your school has one and who this is, in case you ever need any help or advice.

Some schools have rules about what clothes can be worn. Each community home and foster carer has a budget to provide you with clothing. Ask about your clothing allowance.

There will be adults at school who are there to help and support you learn and achieve. Many schools have learning mentors who can provide help if you need it. Most schools can also arrange for young people to have 'buddies', who are sometimes older pupils or mentors from local colleges. These people can

be of great help because they can tell you their own stories about how they handled their own friendships and home situations as well as their studies.

All schools have equality policies that set out how all their children and young people will be treated. You can ask for a copy of this policy and even become involved in reviewing it.



Health and your health plan

Having good health is also really important for getting on in life. It's not just about physical health – good health includes emotional health and sexual health too.

If you are in care, the social care team has to make sure that you are well looked after and healthy. If you were living with your family, they would need to do the same.

The best way to check your health is to see a nurse or a doctor once a year for a check-up. The law says that all children and young people who are looked after should see a nurse or a doctor once a year for a 'health assessment' or a 'looked after medical'. They will write down all

the important information in your health plan, and together you will agree what information to share with your social worker and your foster carer.

Your social worker or carer should also arrange for you to go to the dentist and for an eye check every year.

Your carer and your social worker should talk to you about how you are feeling, and about your sexual health and relationships. Try to be open with them, and ask them any questions you have. If you would rather talk to someone anonymously, there are helplines and websites you can use (see page 43).

Leaving care

Leaving home can be an exciting time for any young person – everyone has their own particular hopes and fears. When you leave your foster carers' home or a care home, you will need practical skills, like being able to do the cooking, washing and budgeting, as well as the self-confidence to be independent and to make new friends.

It's good to be well-prepared for this, so your social worker and your carer will think about this with you before you turn 16.

And you don't have to leave care at 16 – it's important to wait until you really feel ready.

A local council's responsibilities towards you do not end when you stop being looked after.

Most social care teams have specialist after care teams that support young people at various stages of the leaving care process. The services on offer include advice and practical assistance on things like employment, training and education; housing and accommodation; welfare rights and benefits advice; advocacy; and health. This can help you make a successful move from care to independence.

There is a wide variety of accommodation options, depending on what is available in your local area. These might include staying with your foster family or moving to supported lodgings, shared housing, hostels or your own flat.

Getting your voice heard

Most schools and colleges have a representative pupil or student council, so children and young people can have their say.

Many local areas also have a youth council to ensure that the views of all children and young people are heard by local politicians and policy-makers.

Children's rights services

Most local areas have an independent children's rights and advocacy service for children and young people who are in or are leaving care. They can:

- ★ help to put a stop to things that should not happen
- ★ get answers to your questions or argue your case
- ★ give advice and information
- ★ help you make a complaint
- ★ help you say what you want and not what other people think and to be on your side
- ★ help you have a say in decisions that affect you
- ★ try and resolve problems
- ★ let you know what your rights are.

If you are not happy about how you are being looked after then you can complain to your social care team. There are people there who



will try very hard to sort out your problem. And if they cannot sort out your problem, they will find someone who can.

You can find the address or phone number of your local service by asking your social worker or carer. If they don't know, phone your local council and they should be able to tell you. You can get the website and phone number of your local council at:
www.localgovernmentwebsites.co.uk/

Some useful local information may be included in the back of this booklet.

Directory

Are you curious about soul music?

Do you want to know where the best place is on the web to find out about Polish food or Rastafarian clothing?

This directory could be a good place to find out. Enjoy your journey!

Newspapers you might like to read

Asia Times www.atimes.com	business and news from around the world
Blackbright Magazine www.itzcaribbean.com/blackbright_news_uk.php	music, fashion, hair, beauty, dance, health and food
The Caribbean Times www.caribbeantimes.co.uk	for Caribbean news, sport, business and culture
Ebony Jet www.ebonyjet.com	politics, the arts, culture, multimedia and travel
Polish Express www.polishexpres.co.uk	website and weekly newspaper for news from Poland and the UK
Pride Magazine www.pridemagazine.com	fashion, culture and music for 'women of colour' in the UK
The Voice www.voice-online.co.uk	sports, entertainment and news for the 'black' community in the UK

Books you might find interesting

A Long Walk to Freedom

Nelson Mandela

Mandela's autobiography details life, prison, struggle and the politics of the African National Congress

Ajeemah and His Son

James Berry

A story for young adults about a father and son's experiences of slavery in Jamaica in the early 19th century

Dragonkeeper

Carole Wilkinson

First in a trilogy for children, about a young Chinese girl who has to help the Imperial Dragonkeeper. Gives an insight into ancient Chinese philosophy

I Is a Long Memored Woman

Grace Nichols

Award-winning book of poetry characterised by Caribbean rhythms

Look We Have Coming to Dover!

Daljit Nagra

Another award-winning poetry collection, this time about Indian people who have settled in Britain, and their children

Mixed: An anthology of short fiction on the multiracial experience

Edited by Chandra Prasad

A recent collection of short stories. One reviewer on Amazon said: 'the first time I ever felt one of an "us" was when I read this book'

Noughts and Crosses

Malorie Blackman

Sephy and Callum have been best friends since childhood. The story explores love, racism and violence as they grow up

The Iron Ring

Lloyd Alexander

Fantasy novel for children, which draws strongly on Indian mythology

(Un)arranged Marriage

Bali Rai

Set in Leicester's Punjabi community, this story follows teenager Manny as he struggles to keep links with his family and live his own life

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Anti-slavery novel, first published in 1852, which fuelled the abolitionist cause

Music you might like to listen to

Jazz and blues

Ella Fitzgerald
Louis Armstrong
BB King

Reggae

Bob Marley
Gregory Isaacs
King Tubby

Dub

Mad Professor
Roots Manuva
Asian Dub

Soul and northern soul

Otis Redding
Aretha Franklin
The Isley Brothers

Gospel

Yolanda Adams
The Staple Singers
The Blind Boys of Alabama

Jungle and drum & bass

Goldie
LTJ Bukem
Grooverider

2-tone and ska

Madness
The Specials
Desmond Dekker

Grime*

Roll Deep
Dizzee Rascal
Lady Sovereign

Disco and funk

Michael Jackson
Donna Summer
James Brown



Rap*

Missy Elliott
Jay Z
Eminem

Hip-hop*

De La Soul
Run DMC
LL Cool J

Bhangra

Panjabi MC
Swami
Bally Sagoo

Hindi

Lata Mangeshkar
Sonu Nigam
Sukhwinder Singh

R&B

Mariah Carey
Boyz II Men
Alicia Keys

* Some of these artists' music may have 'parental advisory' warnings because of explicit lyrics (for example, swear words) that are unsuitable for children. **Always look for the radio-edited version of songs and speak to your carer about how to find the right music for you.**

Useful websites

Health and well-being

www.get2know.org.uk

This is mainly for looked after children and young people in Lambeth in South London, but lots of the information is relevant wherever you live. It has sections on health, education and what it means to be in care.

www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

Who Cares? Trust is for children in care. This website has a section where you can read true life stories, play games and explore the problem page.

www.voiceyp.org

Telephone 0808 800 5792

Free helpline if you need advice on anything to do with being in care.

www.nyas.net

Telephone 0800 61 61 01

Another free helpline if you need advice on anything to do with being in care.

Sex and relationships

www.brook.org.uk

Telephone 0808 802 1234

Brook provides free, confidential sexual health advice and services specifically for young people under 25, through its website and helpline service.

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople

Free, confidential advice on sexual health, find a contraceptive clinic near you and read answers to common questions about sex.

www.connexions-direct.com

Telephone 080 800 13 2 19

This site is aimed at 13 to 19 year olds and has information on a wide range of topics. You can also get confidential advice and practical help by speaking to an adviser.

www.thesite.org

For 16–24 year olds looking for information on topics like relationships, health, drugs, working, studying, and legal and financial issues. Peer-to-peer support through the community area.

www.youngminds.org.uk/young-people

Information to help you cope with difficult feelings.

www.teenagehealthfreak.org

This website provides health information to teenagers on a range of topics in a cringe-free and entertaining way. You can also ask questions to Dr Ann.

www.likeitis.org.uk

Free information about sexual health, pregnancy, sexuality, puberty and more.

www.need2know.co.uk

A website with information and advice on a large range of topics including sexual health, sexuality and relationships.

Looking after yourself

www.blackstylists.com

The latest hairstyles and trends from America.

www.blackbeautyandhair.com

Features and product reviews covering hair, make-up and nails.

Information about racism and racial awareness

www.britkid.org

About ethnicity, racism and growing up in Britain, and made with young people in mind.

www.stophateuk.org

For anyone affected by a hate crime.

www.brownskin.net

Features and advice for people with darker skin. Tips on understanding your skin type plus topics like acne, hair loss and skin cancer.

www.naar.org.uk

The National Assembly Against Racism campaigns on anti-racist issues affecting British society.

www.kidscape.org.uk/childrenteens

Information and advice on bullying issues and how to deal with them.

Some famous people to inspire you

Throughout history, people from ethnic minority communities have made valuable contributions to society. Many have achieved great things and become inspiring role models for young people – often in spite of poverty or other obstacles they overcame as children, or sometimes even as adults.

But role models do not have to be famous to inspire you. A teacher, family member or a friend can be a role model to you. Anyone who you admire or respect can have a positive influence on your life.

Seek out a role model you can learn from and remember that you can rise to great things too.

Valerie Amos: Member of the House of Lords and the first woman of African heritage to sit in Cabinet, from 2003 to 2007.

www.theyworkforyou.com/peer/baroness_amos

Sirimavo Bandaranaike: Three times Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the first woman in the world to head a democratically elected, modern government.

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sirimavo_Ratwatte_Dias_Bandaranaike

Benazir Bhutto: Prime minister of Pakistan, elected twice and the first woman premier of an Islamic state. Assassinated in 2007.

www.benazirbhutto.net

Didier Drogba: A Chelsea striker also known for his efforts to end the 30-year civil war in his native Ivory Coast.

www.didierdrogba.com

Dr Mo Ibrahim: A Sudanese businessman who sold his telecommunications company in 2005 to launch a peace prize for African leaders worth \$5 million.

www.moibrahimfoundation.org

Amir Khan: The intercontinental light-welterweight boxing champion and Commonwealth lightweight champion.

www.amirkhanworld.com

Carol Lake: Managing director of banking giant JP Morgan's Europe, Middle East and African divisions. She has also served on government committees.

www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=679

Sir Trevor McDonald: Britain's first African-Caribbean news anchor on television. Born in Trinidad, he received an OBE in 1992.

www.100greatblackbritons.com/bios/trevor_macdonald.html

Nelson Mandela: The first 'black' president and the first democratically elected leader of South Africa. Spent 27 years in prison for his role in challenging apartheid (the official system of segregation or discrimination on racial grounds in South Africa). He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

www.nelsonmandela.org

Dadabhai Naoroji: The first Asian member of parliament, elected in 1882.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dadabhai_Naoroji

Barack Obama: First mixed race American president, elected 2008. He was a community organiser in Chicago, then qualified as a civil rights lawyer before becoming a politician. He lived with his grandparents between the ages of 9 and 18.

www.whitehouse.gov/administration/President_Obama

Monty Panesar: The first Sikh to ever play for the English cricket team and the first Sikh to represent any country other than India in cricket.
www.monty-panesar.com

Heather Rabbatts: A Jamaican-born lawyer, businesswoman and broadcaster. She is a director of Millwall Football Club and was awarded a CBE in 2000.
www.londonspeakerbureau.co.uk/heather_rabbatts.aspx

Dr John Sentamu: The Archbishop of York. He was born in Uganda and is the first member of an ethnic minority community to serve as an Archbishop in England.
www.archbishopofyork.org

Tinchy Stryder: Born in Ghana, British hip hop vocalist who has topped UK record charts and toured with Kano. Also has a BA degree in

moving image and animation from the University of East London and lectures in schools on personal finance.

Twilight Bey: Twilight turned away from gangland life in Los Angeles, mediated peace between two famous rival LA street gangs, the Bloods & Crips, and now lives and works in the UK running projects to counter despair and violence in deprived communities.

Oprah Winfrey: Born to a teenage mother and abused as a teenager, Oprah worked hard at school and won a scholarship to university. She worked in radio, then television and is now believed to be the richest African-American of the 20th century.
www.oprah.com

Benjamin Zephaniah: British Rastafarian writer and poet. He has published 11 books.
www.benjaminzephaniah.com

World food and drink

www.foodbycountry.com/
A directory of recipes from more than 50 countries across the globe.

www.blacknet.co.uk/recipe.htm
Directory of African and Caribbean recipes that people can contribute to.

www.jamaicans.com/culture/rasta/ital_food.shtml
Information about Rastafarian food.

www.chopstix.com
Chinese dishes, ingredients, restaurant reviews and resources.

www.vietworldkitchen.com
Vietnamese food, culture and recipes.

www.myjewishlearning.com/culture/food.htm
Wide-ranging information on Jewish food and culture.

www.igourmet.com/polishfood.asp
An American site with traditional recipes and information about Polish history and culture.

www.al-bab.com/arab/food.htm
Recipes from around the Middle East, categorised by country. The site also has cookery notes and information on food and Islam.

www.recipesindian.com
A collection of recipes from across India, including recipes for ceremonies and festivals.

http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Somalian_Cuisine
All about Somalian food, including its history and traditions.

www.motherlandnigeria.com/recipes.html
Recipes and other information about Nigerian culture and cuisine.