



investing in children

'RESPECT'

2001

By

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We are five young people from Investing in Children. In April 2001 we attended a young people's agenda day along with 20 other young people. One of the big issue on the day was '**respect**'

Two questions came up -

- Why do adults get treated better than young people?
- Why do we have to earn respect when adults don't

Sometimes it is difficult to explain to people, especially adults, what being treated with a lack of respect really means. So we thought about some situations that young people experience and came up with a series of questions we could ask young people and adults to see if there were any differences.

We wanted to find out people's recent experiences so asked them to think about the last 3 months. We asked 4 questions

1. In the last 3 months have you been shouted at by a public servant?
2. In the last 3 months have you been refused access to a public building/public space?
3. In the last 3 months have you been asked to leave a public building/public space?
4. In the last 3 months have you ever wanted to make a complaint about a public service/servant but were unable to do so?

We carried out most of the research by interview, we did send out some of the questions on a form but only to adults. We decided that anyone aged 18 and under be classed as a young person, and anyone aged 19 and over an adult.

We have included answers to the questions and also some of the experiences people wanted to share.

In the last 3 months have you been shouted at by a public servant?

Young People	Adults
26 said yes 5 said no	1 said yes 33 said no
<u>Total 31</u>	<u>Total 34</u>

In the last 3 months have you been refused access to a public building/public space?

Young People	Adults
17 said yes 15 said no	1 said yes 24 said no
<u>Total 32</u>	<u>Total 25</u>

In the last 3 months have you been asked to leave a public building/public space?

Young People	Adults
19 said yes 12 said no	0 said yes 30 said no
<u>Total 31</u>	<u>Total 30</u>

In the last 3 months have you ever wanted to make a complaint about a public service/servant but were unable to do so?

Young People	Adults
10 said yes 10 said no	4 said yes 22 said no
<u>Total 20</u>	<u>Total 26</u>

Examples of being shouted at by a public servant (young people)

“by a policeman for smiling when he was talking to me, I was trying to be polite but he thought I was rude”

How did you feel?

“I thought if I was older he wouldn't have thought smiling was rude”

“by a shopkeeper for asking his name because he said it was insulting”

How did you feel?

“I only asked a simple question and he screamed at me, I was shocked”

“by a bus driver because he was in a rush”

How did you feel?

“it wouldn't have happened if I was older”

“by a youth worker for being in a room I shouldn't have been”

How did you feel?

“shocked, it was totally over the top”

“in a shop because I took too long to choose”

How did you feel?

“made me feel 2cm high”

“by teachers, they shout all the time”

How did you feel?

“not too bothered, it's what teachers do”

“by a youth worker for no reason I could see”

How did you feel?

“shocked”

Examples of being shouted at by a public servant (adults)

We only had one adult who answered yes to this question but she did not give an example. One young male said –

“I don't get shouted at now, it feels as though I suddenly have more respect even though I have done nothing except become 19”

Examples of being refused access to a public building/space (young people)

“I am not allowed in Peterlee Leisure Centre because of the people I used to hang around with”

How does it make you feel?

“it's totally unfair”

“I'm not allowed in my local shop because the owners had a run in with the a gang I talk to”

How does it make you feel?

“its shocking because I am not a trouble maker but all teens are classed the same”

“I'm barred from my corner shop for being cheeky”

How does it make you feel?

“I think I might have been a bit loud”

“I'm not allowed in my youth club for entering a forbidden room

How does it make you feel?

“I just want to be treated like anyone else”

“the local shop during school days because there are too many of us”

How does it make you feel?

“don't know”

Examples of being refused access to a public building/space (adults)

"I was refused access to a public footpath during foot and mouth epidemic"

How does it make you feel?

"a bit frustrating but if I understood why"

Examples of being asked to leave a public building/space (young people)

"I was kicked off the bus for not having the correct change"

How did you feel?

"huffed because I had to wait 30 minutes for the next bus"

"for using the toilet in Meadowfield Sports Centre because I was just a spectator"

How did you feel?

"it wouldn't happen to an old man would it?"

"chucked out of the park for walking on the grass"

How did you feel?

"angry, I thought this was a free country"

"told to leave the corner shop because they had just mopped the floor"

How did you feel?

"how stupid, I would have bought something"

"told to leave the library because my mobile phone kept going off"

How did you feel?

"why didn't she just ask me to turn it off"

"moved from the Dene by the Police"

How did you feel?

"feel like not going out as I can't go anywhere"

"from a local meeting place by the Police because there were too many of us (5 of us) "

How did you feel?

"sick of it"

None of the adults we asked had ever been asked to leave a public building/place.

Examples of wanting to make a complaint about public service/public servant but were unable to do so (young people)

"bus drivers who charge the wrong fare and refuse to stop"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"no point"

"after I was banned from the youth club for fighting I wanted to complain that it wasn't all my fault but only me was banned"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"they just said I was being cheeky"

"bus driver who drove straight past me"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"don't know where you go"

"bus drivers who are rude"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"I don't know how to complain"

"I'd like to complain to the NHS for making my sister to wait 2 months to have pins in her legs"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"no, wish people would tell me where I can go"

"when they shut down my local leisure centre"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"put my complaint in a box and they wrote back saying it was a council decision"

"I complained about my course tutor who left 20 minutes before the end of the lesson"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"yes, he called me a lazy shit"

"a youth worker who is always shouting at me"

Did you complain? what happened ?

"don't know how to"

4 out of adults said they had wanted to make a complaint but did not give examples.

Conclusions

It is clear from this short piece of research that your age can affect the quality of service you receive from a range of different services. Young people are treated differently from adults and are not given the same respect. Bus drivers are the public servants that most young people in our survey complained about most followed by youth workers, teachers and police officers. Shop keepers also show a lack of respect toward young people.

We don't think that many adults would put up with being treated this way and we would like this report to start a discussion about how we can change things for the better.