

# Supporting young black men

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**The national unemployment rate for black young people is more than double the unemployment rate for white young people.**

**In 2013:**

- The unemployment rate for white young people was 19%.
- The unemployment rate for black young people was 45%.

# **The unemployment rate for young black men is even higher.**

In 2012:

- The unemployment rate for young white men was 22%.
- The unemployment rate for young black men was 50%.

Statistics for employment and unemployment by age & gender & ethnicity are not routinely published.

So it's not easy to closely track the situation for young black men.

# Action research initiative

- Trust for London is supporting an action research project by BTEG focused on young black male unemployment in London
- Six month project from October 2013 to March 2014
- Working closely with a parallel initiative by Jobcentre Plus to develop action plans to increase young black male employment in four target boroughs (Haringey, Hackney, Brent and Lambeth)
- The BTEG research will result in an Action Plan to increase the employment rate of young black men
- The Action Plan will focus on what works in getting young black men into employment
- The Action Plan will provide an investment framework for funders

# Research approach

- Working with partners wherever possible
- Discussions with all stakeholders
- Building on existing evidence
- Focusing on **what works**

# Research activities

## **Young black men**

- On-line survey of young black men has been completed
- Focus groups with young black men in Wood Green & Hackney (two more still to be held in Lambeth and Brent)

## **Local authorities**

- Discussions with senior officers in LB Hackney, LB Haringey, LB Lambeth and LB Brent have taken place.

## **Employment support providers**

- Discussions with Work Programme primes and voluntary sector providers

## **HE & FE employability advisers**

- Discussion and on-line survey

## **Employers**

- We are trying to identify employers who have been proactive in recruiting talented young black men

## **Other key agencies**

- NAS, GLA, Jobcentre Plus

# Key findings so far

- A lot of views about why unemployment is so high for young black men. But not much concrete evidence.
- Some monitoring of outcomes for young black men - but not clear who is looking at and acting on the data.
- Some local authorities starting to prioritise young black men.
- Not much sign of joint working between agencies.
- Reluctance to identify employers offering good practice approaches to recruiting young black men.



# Findings from our survey of young black men

- 160 survey responses (two thirds in education, employment or training, one third NEET)
- 88% of young black men who are NEET say they are trying 'very hard' or 'quite hard' to find a job
- Only one third of respondents believe that they get all the help they need to help them to get jobs

# Findings from our survey of young black men

Young black men give the following reasons for high levels of unemployment:

- Racism or discrimination by society or employers
- Negative media and cultural stereotypes of young black men
- Young black men have bad attitudes or behaviour

# Findings from our focus groups with young black men

- 16 participants so far (Wood Green & Hackney)
- None had ever taken part in a group like this before
- All had **a lot** to say about young black male unemployment

# Key themes from focus group discussions

- Society and employers generally take a negative view of young black men.
- Negative views are created by and reproduced by the media
- Being treated in a negative way, e.g. in a job interview, is difficult to prove.
- Trying to 'do the right thing' is not easy and most feel they are on their own in this.
- Some JCP and WP advisers are good and helpful but most do not seem interested.
- There are not enough role models (e.g. people with successful careers) within black communities.
- Employers want work experience but there are no opportunities to get this experience.
- Education at all levels is focused on theory and most consider themselves practical rather than theoretical learners.

# What do you think is needed to get more young black men into work?

- Do you have experience or examples of what works?
- Join the discussion
- Contact BTEG