

the award winning...

exposure[®]

www.exposure.org.uk

a voice for young people

Interested? Download Exposure magazine at www.exposure.org.uk or call 020 8883 0260 to find out more.



Do not turn the page! Do not adjust your glasses! This is not an advertorial! Exposure, north London's multi-award winning youth media charity, has teamed up with the Ham & High to ensure the voice of local young people is heard. They've written everything you're about to read, so fasten up and enjoy the ride.



Exposure at the Spirit of London Awards

The future?



Zahrah Haider, 17

Tatiana Marongwe, 17

Is our generation the future of the nation? You wouldn't think so, the way student fees are increasing, youth centres are being threatened with closure and funding for youth services is being cut.

We as young people get such a bad press for being anti-social, yet when we take the initiative to be pro-social through youth activities such as Exposure, that opportunity is taken away from us. This means that young people, who want to make a difference, may not be able to.

We're not just doing work for the community, we're also picking up

skills that we can use when we're out in the real world, like when applying for jobs. If these opportunities are taken away, how will we, as young people, maintain the idealism, the mind-set and the energy to make a difference for a better future, not just for ourselves, but for other people too?

If we're going to bring about a positive change, we need all the support we can get. Cutting funds will only hold us back. What is the Big Society? Isn't it us young people trying to be a part of something bigger than ourselves?

Night school

Little Miss Gordon, 14, gets a lesson in growing up too fast.

I'm 14, but I feel older. I look older. Nightlife echoes, the clubs are calling, the pubs persist, they pull me closer. I want to be out there making the most of the nightlife, not watching the clock strike 7pm while doing homework. Is it wrong to wave goodbye to my childhood?

School portrait, aged 11: Golden curls, plaits and ponytails; a fresh face of innocence, and a head full of fairytales. The school uniform: a newly ironed shirt tucked into a skirt draped below the knee. Me sitting on the gym bench surrounded by my classmates.

Facebook picture, aged 14: The hair is now highlighted red and straightened, the once fresh face of innocence now plastered in foundation, the eyes heavily smoked in black, and the lips, red and plump. The little revealing River Island number is worn with those new black stilettos and I'm standing at the bar with my 20-year-old friends, the start of the evening.

A typical night out: the girls and I legging it to the pub, the evening drawing closer and the streets of London becoming alive as the lights brightened. The regular sound of our heels pacing the pavement synchronised with my heartbeat, and we're almost there. We meet up with the lads, and they get a round in, the shots soon arrive. Before I know it, it is 1,2,3 go! After several rounds it's off to the club, where the fun will really begin.

I am and I get a phone call, a friend in need maybe. I answer the phone. I wish I hadn't. It's a schoolmate who asks me where I am. They are all having a girly sleepover to study for the exam tomorrow: "Wow, I can't believe I missed that," I say sarcastically. I end the pointless phone call, order another double vodka coke and party the night away.



Models used

4 am, Tuesday morning, and we go back to someone's house; can't remember much except for waking up in the garden, a few hours later. The cold breeze hits the back of my bare legs. It's a school day, and I quickly realise that going out on a school night wasn't the best of ideas.

8 am, limping home with friends with only one heel on. The reality that I have an exam in less than 45 minutes sets in. The phone call from my school friends the night before flashes to the front of my mind.

Ok, although at this point my hangover isn't that bad, I am still in my revealing dress, 20 minutes away from home. I need to sober up, change into my uniform, revise and turn up on time to my exam.

The initial idea of a fun and outrageous midweek night out quickly turns into a disaster. And there is nothing I can do to change

the situation I find myself in. The damage has been done.

But, as I start to panic, my older friends will be sleeping off their hangover. For the first time, the division between us becomes apparent, and I would do anything to be around my 14-year-old classmates again.

I've been constantly told that I am growing up too quickly, that I should be acting my own age, that I am still a child.

I always felt patronised and wanted to prove people wrong: that I could hold my own with adults. But the harder I try, the more I seem to prove myself wrong. What I thought was nagging was actually advice, and I ignored it. That day, I turned up 15 minutes late to that exam in no fit state to take it.

Results are on their way. Wish me luck.