

Children, Young People and Flooding: Recovery and Resilience

Project Team: Maggie Mort, Marion Walker, Amanda Bingley, Alison Lloyd Williams (Lancaster University) and Virginia Howells (Save the Children UK)
Children and young people from South Ferriby Primary School and The Magna Carta School, Staines-Upon-Thames

PROBLEM

Children are missing, virtually invisible in flood policy and risk management: where they are mentioned, they are usually positioned as vulnerable and more likely to be seen as a problem rather than a resource.

Understanding children's perspectives is a vital part of building flood resilience: as citizens, children have a right to contribute and be consulted about matters that affect them.

We worked in-depth with **30 children affected by the 2013/4 floods in rural and urban areas.**



Modelling the hard work of recovery

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To understand children's experiences of the flooding, the **impact on their lives**, their **resilience** and the longer-term **recovery process**.

To discover how **children can best be supported in a flood** and how to **enhance their resilience** to future emergencies.

To **influence emergency and flood policy and practice** to better meet the needs, respond to the insights of and **build the resilience of children, young people and families.**

Young People's Flood Manifesto

These are our ideas for how to make things better in the UK based on our experiences. We want you to listen to us and take action to make sure that young people are better supported before, during and after floods.

Reference as:
Young People's Flood Manifesto 2015, Children, Young People and Flooding: Recovery and Resilience, Lancaster University and Save the Children
<http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/cyp-floodrecovery/outputs>

Flood warnings need to be clearer, so people understand them and know what to do

- Awareness could be raised via TV, newspaper, radio, social media like Facebook, and through music.
- Information should be put up in the community, like it is for fire safety, for example up on notice boards in Starbucks or in telephone boxes.
- Warnings shouldn't come when the floodwater is up to your waist - then it's too late!

Flood defences and protection need to be better

- Drains should be cleared out properly.
- More sand bags should be available - before it starts to flood.
- Build more flood defences and barriers.
- There should be more grants for flood gates and things to help make your house more resistant - and help with the red tape.

We should help each other more, especially those more vulnerable than you

- Families and communities should have a flood plan.
- Every household and school should have a 'flood box' with supplies, including food and water.
- Families with pets should be prepared to protect them, e.g. having a dog raft.
- Community patrols should look out for people still in their houses - and make sure there aren't any forgotten roads.
- Look out for people who need more help, like young children, older and disabled people.
- Create local community flood points - like fire evacuation points.
- Develop a Community Flood Fund - to raise money in case it floods again, to help people who are flooded to provide safety, comfort, and blankets/supplies.

 Save the Children

 Lancaster University

COMMUNITY LEVEL LEADERSHIP

Children proposed clear plans to improve flood resilience in homes, communities, schools and wider society.

They have presented their **Flood Manifestos** to their schools, resilience forums, regional and national conferences, in Parliament, through media engagement: local and national TV, radio and Press and collaborated in a six-minute film to promote their messages.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ACTION

- Project has stimulated involvement of local authorities in resilience building, e.g. young people's pages on 'Surrey Prepared' website
- Influenced insurance industry, e.g. creation of 'Ten Tips for supporting flood-affected children and families'
- Inspired Environment Agency to recognise the importance of engaging with children in flood risk management
- Developed the capacity of children's services to support flood-affected children, e.g. Barnardo's work with The Flood Suitcase project in Cumbria, Save the Children supporting Flood Suitcase development in Lancashire
- Fire & Rescue Service: development of water safety and flood awareness education work in schools

TRANSFERABILITY

- The Flood Suitcase Project - method now piloted for wider application in flood recovery AND flood awareness
- Extreme Weather Education Initiative follow-on project (Partners: EA, The Met Office, BEIS, Fire & Rescue, Universities of Lancaster and Worcester)
- Children are now involved in building resilience to ALL hazards and disasters across Europe through EC project

FUNDING PROGRESSION

ESRC Urgency Grant led to ESRC uplift grant, then Lancaster University Knowledge Exchange award, then EC Horizon2020 award: Cultures of Disaster Resilience Among Children and Young People (CUIDAR)



Horizon 2020 Programme



See the 'Flood Project' film and download the **Final Project Report** at www.lancaster.ac.uk/floodrecovery