

## Hidden Lives...

# Putting our generation on the table. Unity.

*Hidden Lives is a powerful thought provoking documentary about people with learning disabilities from Black and Ethnic Minority communities. The film was produced as a partnership project between Cardiff People First and Newport People First. It was directed by award winning film Company Rice N Peas Films and funded by Equality and Human Rights Commission.*

*Karen Warner, from Learning Disability Wales met a couple of the members of the group and the project workers to talk about the project.*

Hidden Lives features people's lives and shows the problems and difficulties they face in society. The film has been made to challenge misconceptions, fear and ignorance of people with learning disability.

It is hoped that the film will change society's attitudes towards disability - so that people are treated as valued respected and equal members of society who have valuable contributions to offer the world.

### **What are the issues?**

People from BME communities

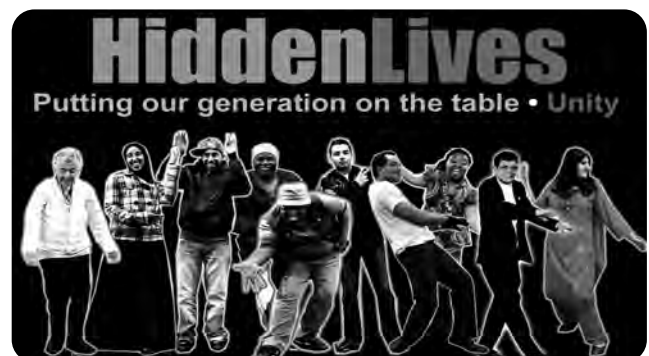
with a learning disability can often lead a life hidden away from society. Being from a minority community and also having a learning disability can mean facing double discrimination; being judged twice. Most of the issues are the same as those for people with a learning disability in general, such as lack of acceptance, understanding and inequality. However, BME families often feel increasingly isolated from society as information on services and support can be inaccessible.

People are therefore not receiving the same opportunities in life.

### **The Film**

The film focused on several people from different BME communities including Jamaican, Somali, Muslim, Mixed Race, Nigerian and Pakistani. The film shows stories of people's lives and what they are capable of doing. Although the film is a BME film, it is also about some of the wider issues that people with a learning disability face.

The film also aims to get more referrals to the project by showing how speaking up for yourself can be good for your confidence and life.



# Llais

## The people featured

### Ope

Ope is from Africa. When she was 19 years old she came to Cardiff.

*"I got bullied in college and on the bus. People would say to me 'go back to your own country'. When this happens, it makes me sad for a week. I wasn't listened to. I am happy with People First, they have taken me to the place I am at now. I discovered my talent in drama.*

*I really enjoyed being filmed because I love to be on stage. My parents and I felt really proud to be representing the BME group. I think the film shows the difficulties we face as a BME community and that we have a voice and we need to speak out. We have a voice and hopefully you will hear ours".*

Other members of the group fondly call Ope the 'Drama Queen'!

### Umar

*"I have been a member of Newport People First for 2 years. I used to go to Newport Young Carers. When I was with them I went out once or twice a month. Now I go out much more. I am listened to. I have more confidence. I am respected. Being part of People First has opened doors to other things-I*

*now run my own show on Newport City Radio called Desi Beats"*

### Ean

*"It's better people do not judge us and what we stand for. It's better people understand us and put us in a community where we feel loved and respected. In the world we can test ourselves and test our skills. The film shows our problems and difficulties, so that we can find positive solutions. We hope it will change attitudes and gain us respect. We want people to relate to us. Not to be judgmental"*

### Saul

One of the people featured in the film is Saul. He is also a film editor. He has done his own films and mixes videos.

See **Saul's Video Mix** on YouTube 3min 36 sec long.  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5n7a6V\\_-YQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5n7a6V_-YQ)

### Fehmida and Kalpana Project workers

"This has been an influential project and has exceeded expectations. The message has got out. The film wakes you up to what people 'can do' which helps change society's attitudes and inspires others from BME communities"

## Screenings and the future

The film screenings have been led by the members. It was launched in January this year at the National Assembly sponsored by Lorraine Barratt

"I loved this film. Everything was wonderfully put together. It really touched me. The message was loud and clear. People with learning difficulties want and deserve to be treated with respect and given a voice and opportunity to do what they love." Leanne Rahman

"I loved the fact that it was honest and personal. If this diverse group of people can see past the differences why can't the rest of the world? We have a lot to learn." Vina Patel, Voluntary Action Cardiff

The DVD is now being screened in various community and arts venues in South Wales. The groups want the DVD to be shown in every school and college.

The DVD is £5. Contact: Cardiff People First, Canton House, 435 Cowbridge Road East, Canton, Cardiff, CF5 1JH.  
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