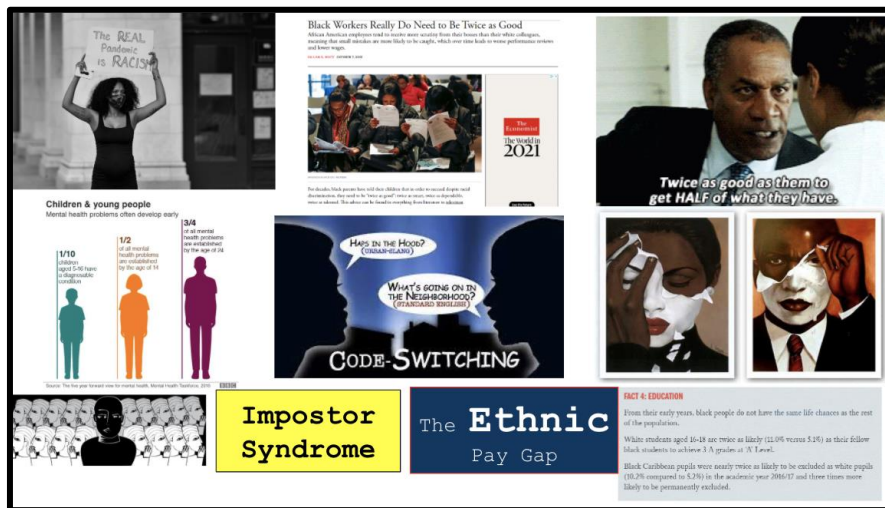
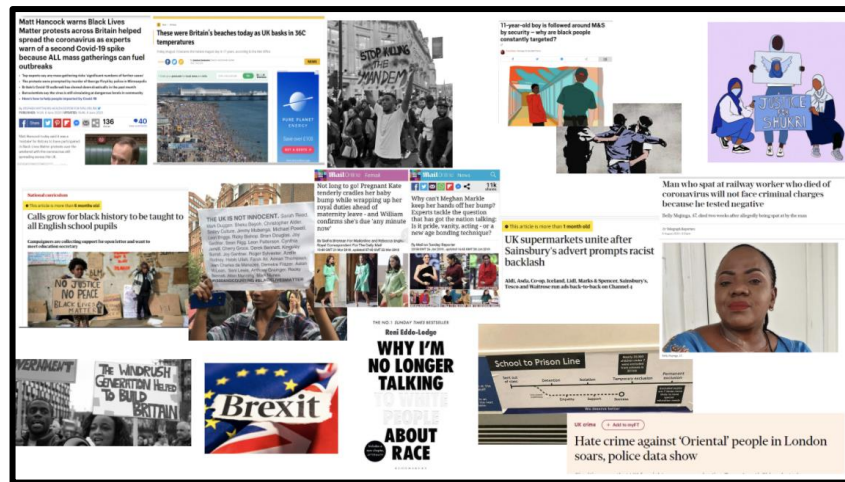

The impact of racism on the mental health of children and young people

— *A summary of the discussion* —

What we did

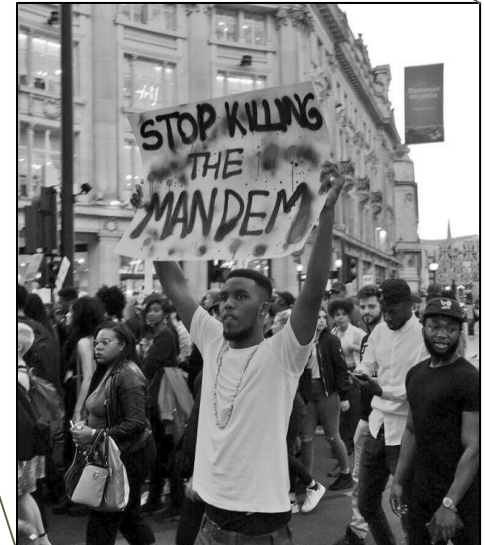
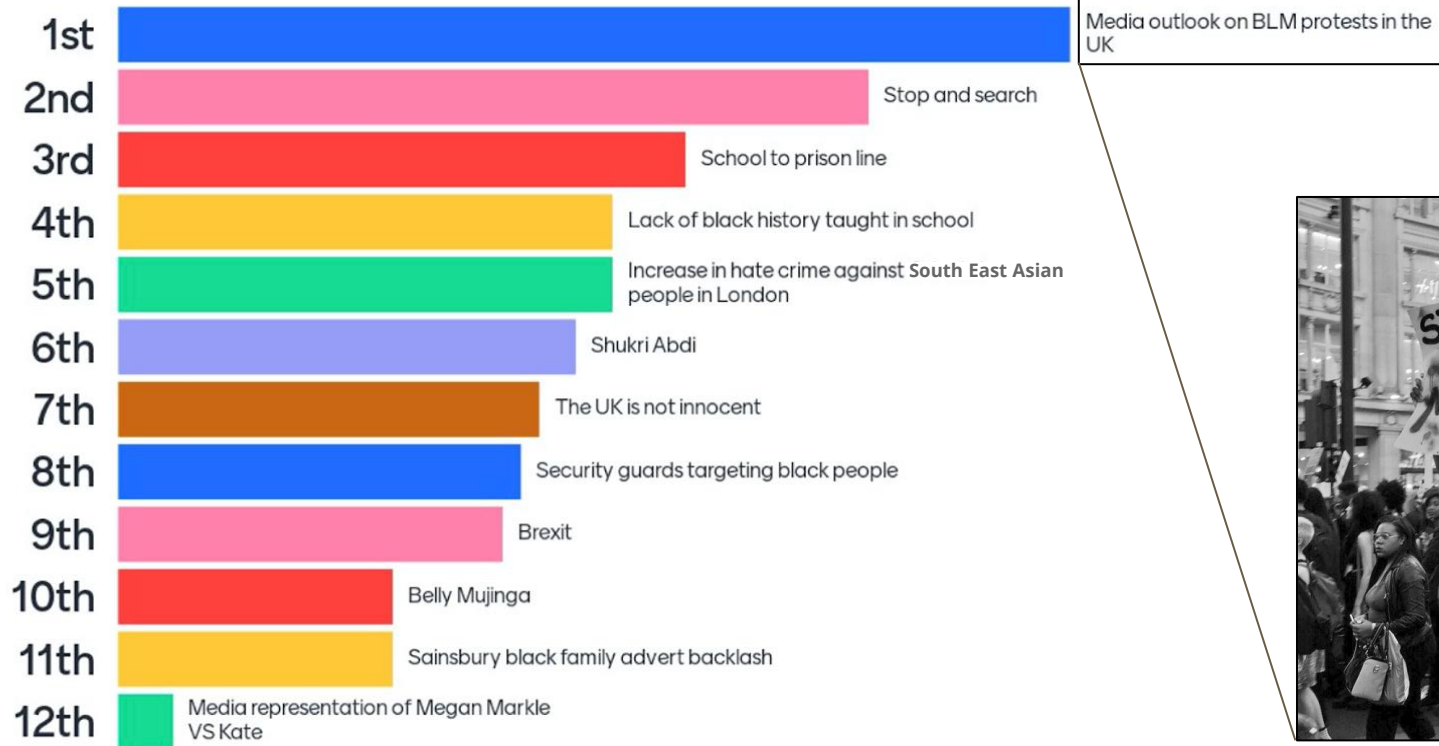
- Invited young people between 16-25 to share their views
- How racism is experienced by C&YP in the UK
- How it affects their mental health
- 3 groups



Demographics

- Ages represented: 17, 18, 18, 19, 24, 25, 25
- Ethnicities represented: Black and Asian
- Genders represented: Male and Female
- 5 Black males
- 1 Asian female, 1 Asian male

Which of these events do you think have affected young people the most?



Experience of racism in the UK

*“In what way do children and young people
in the UK experience racism?”*

Stereotypes and public perception

- Feared by strangers

“I’ve never done anything illegal, but...for example, walking into a shop, and coming out buying nothing... I’ve got to do some sort of talking out loud to myself ‘Ah, guess I’ve got nothing to buy’.”

- Stop & search and over-policing

“I feel like the police just target black people the most.”

- Negative portrayal in media and history

“It would be nice to see a bit more of celebration of our culture and not our suffering”



Systemic and institutional racism

- **Disparities and discrimination**

How is it that the most extreme cases where people are having psychotic episodes, it's [Black and Brown people], but when it comes to the stages right at the beginning when you're able to help [we're not getting it]?"

- **School to prison pipeline**

"It's like the system just gives up on them and now a lot of them are in prison and doing time for things that could of been very much avoidable."

- **Awareness and sensitivity**

"Here [in the UK] I feel like racism is not as upfront"



Representation and tokenism

- **Meaningful representation**

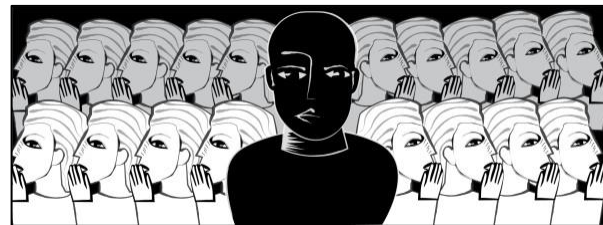
“There is a lack of representation of BAME groups within the policy and decision making process.”

- **Responsibility without resources**

“Representation without the proper support does not really work.”

- **Lip service**

“[If we] don’t give them space to make change then there’s no point. We’ll be back next year talking about the same thing, just talking about articles that are more recent.”



Impact of racism on mental health

*“What impact are these experiences having
on you and your friends?”*

Identity, belonging and self-esteem

- **Self perception**

“If you always feel like you’re being persecuted, attacked, judged, whatever like in anyway it’s going to damage your perception of others and also how you perceive yourself”

- **Imposter syndrome**

“Impostor syndrome isn’t just about the feeling of being out of place, it’s also the need to be excellent in order to fit in”

- **Othering**

“It’s not even that they don’t view you as an equal, it’s that they genuinely don’t value you as a human being”



Loneliness and social isolation

- **Social rejection**

“I always have in the back of my head that this White person doesn’t like me because I’m Black, or is really trying to overcompensate and like me because I’m Black.”

- **Lack of support**

“I see that for migrants and refugees, they come to the countries and they need to access services, this can be a real barrier as they need to explain their condition in their language to genuinely speak up.”



Self-protection, palatability and performance

- **Authenticity**

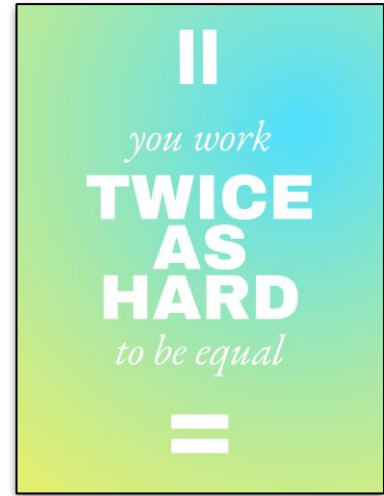
“We always have to be two-faced in a way, you can’t present yourself fully and you have to always represent thousand other people.”

- **Burden of adapting behaviour**

“From a young age I’ve been told certain things like how to enter a situation like if police do stop and search”

- **Exceptionalism**

“You have to make twice the effort just to make them feel comfortable or make them believe that you’re good enough for this role”



Other effects of racism

- **Decision making (e.g. careers)**

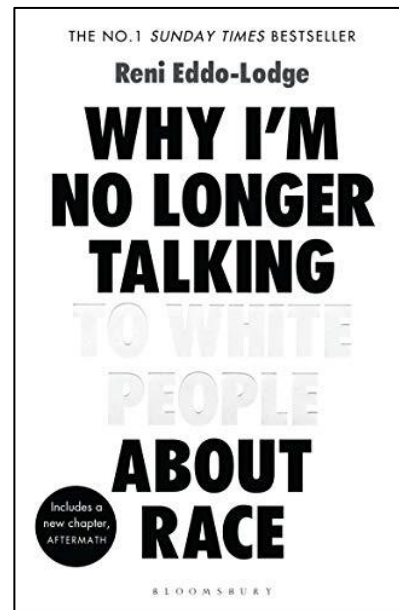
“That’s a community that I just don’t want to be a part of”

- **Family relations (e.g. parental discipline)**

“But Mum, why do I have to be careful with what I say? This is how I speak”

- **Friendships (e.g. rifts and rivalries)**

“Can cause rifts between friends when someone starts doing better - because we know only few of us will make it to the top”



**What should we do
about it?**

Solutions

- Understanding racism
- Co-design solutions
- Lived Experience advisors
- Appropriate and geared services
- Authentic and meaningful engagement