

**Hate Crime  
National Survey**

**Learning Disability Hate Crime:  
Identifying Barriers to Addressing Crime**



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## About the report The Contents

**This report is in 5 Parts:**

### **Part 1 – About the survey**

This says what we did and why we did it.

It explains a bit about the law and the different groups we sent surveys to

### **Part 2 – What the survey told us**

This says what we learned from people who replied to the survey

### **Part 3 – Issues and recommendations**

This says about good ideas to make things better

### **Part 4 – More detail about the survey**

This says more about what we learned from the survey

### **Part 5 – Statistical Context and Data from the Survey**

This says all the figures from the survey and also about research other people have done

## Part 1 About the Survey

In April 2007 Coast 2 Coast and Inclusion North were asked by the Valuing People Support Team to find out what is happening around the country about Hate Crime.

This was done to support the successful 'Stamp Out Hate Crime' campaign launched by the National Forum for people with Learning Disabilities.

All Hate Crime is bad and some of it leads to very serious incidents, even death for some people.

We wanted to find out about reporting and recording crimes and to learn from the people who have already done some work to help people work together to stop Hate Crime happening.

We sent some written surveys and some web surveys to ask more than 700 people and organisations some questions. We had 163 replies.



## We asked these questions....

- Do you think Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties is a problem in your area?
- Do you write down the numbers of people who have complained about Hate Crime?
- What sort of things are you doing to stop Hate Crime?
- Do you have a plan to stop Hate Crime?

## Who did we ask?



Using the Internet and a Questionnaire, we asked -

- 400 Community Safety Partnerships
- 150 Learning Disability Partnership Boards
- 200 Self Advocacy Groups



## The Law



The Law says that People with learning difficulties have the right to protection from Hate Crime.

They include:

- Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and
- Section 146 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003

Other laws for the general public may also apply, like

- Section 4 of the Public Order Act (1986) and
- The Protection from Harassment Act (1997)

## What is a Community Safety Partnership?

Community Safety Partnerships were set up by the government to help bring down the number of crimes happening within each area.

By law, these Community Safety Partnerships have to have a local plan about Crime and Disorder and the National plan says they should do something about ALL Hate Crime.

Community Safety Partnerships are made up of people from:

- Local Council
- Police
- Health Professionals
- Other Groups

These are sometimes called Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)

### **What is a Learning Disability Partnership Board?**

Learning Disability Partnership Boards were set up by the Government following the white paper *Valuing People*, to make Valuing People happen. Members include self advocates and professionals from:

- Social services
- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Employment

### **What is an Advocacy Group?**

Self Advocacy groups are about people with learning difficulties speaking up for themselves about the issues that are important to them. These are sometimes called People First or Voice groups.

Valuing People said advocacy was one of the ways people with learning difficulties could get more choice and control in their lives.

Some of the different types of advocacy are:

- Self advocacy - speaking up for yourself
- Citizen advocacy - where someone speaks up for someone they know
- Short term, issue based or crisis advocacy - where people are (usually) paid to speak up for someone about a particular issue, or when they are in a crisis

## Part 2

### What did the Surveys tell us?



#### Is Hate Crime a Problem?

- More than 80% of advocacy groups and 75% of Partnership Boards said that Hate Crime was a problem
- Most Community Safety Partnerships did not see Hate Crime as a special problem (only 43.1%).

This told us that the further away boards and organisations are from people with learning difficulties, the less likely they are to understand the problems they experience.

#### How Do They Know Hate Crime is a Problem?

- Only 36% of the Community Safety Partnerships answered this question.

This tells us most of them didn't have a way of finding out



- Advocacy Groups and Partnership Boards found out by people telling them
- Because of this, we don't know how big the problem is
- No-one seems to want to take responsibility for collecting data on Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties, so the problem isn't tackled

## Tackling Hate Crime

The different organisations were asked to tell us what they were doing to tackle Hate Crime. Some were doing really good things:



- Advocacy groups and Partnership Boards said they were doing campaigns, talks and drama
- Community Safety Partnerships mainly said they were doing publicity and information

## Hate Crime Strategies

The different organisations were asked about their Hate Crime strategies and plans.

The response was confusing and disappointing

- Some thought anti-bullying policies were Hate Crime policies
- Others saw Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties as part of a policy about all Hate Crimes
- And some thought that Council Vulnerable Adult Procedures were the same as Hate Crime policies



Because of this we don't know how many organisations had Hate Crime policies that were just about people with learning difficulties.

Across the three types of organisations we found that less than half expected to have policies in place by the end of the year.

## Part 3 Issues and Recommendations

- We know that people with learning difficulties are having lots of problems with Hate Crime
- This survey tells us that these problems are not always being dealt with, or reported as **crime**. We need to know which crimes are happening, and who they are happening to
- We need to know who is committing Hate Crimes against people with learning difficulties so that everyone knows about the problems people are having
- Quite a few of the Partnership Boards don't know about the role of the Community Safety Partnerships and the other way around
- Advocacy Groups and Learning Disability Partnership Boards should be represented on Community Safety Partnerships



- Lots of good work is happening around the country to STOP Hate Crime, but not all the right people are involved
- No-one is counting the number of Hate Crimes against people with learning difficulties
- We need to find ways that make sure that staff in the different organisations talk to each other and share information about Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties.

## Part 4

### More detail about what the Surveys told us....

#### Community Safety Partnerships – Sixty Four replies (64)

- Forty percent (43%) said they did think Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties was a problem
- The rest didn't know (17%) or didn't think it was a problem (40%)
- Only four (4) said they had been told it was a problem by their local Partnership Board
- Only five (5) said they had been told by a local Advocacy Group
- Less than one third (31%) said they write down the numbers of Hate Crimes against people with learning difficulties
- **But**, quite a few were doing something about the problem, like

Helping people to report it

Training police

Producing easy read information



- Twenty eight (28) said they had a plan about Hate Crime, but only five (5) of these talked about Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties
- Thirty eight (38) didn't have a plan and...
- More than half of these weren't going to have a plan this year or didn't know

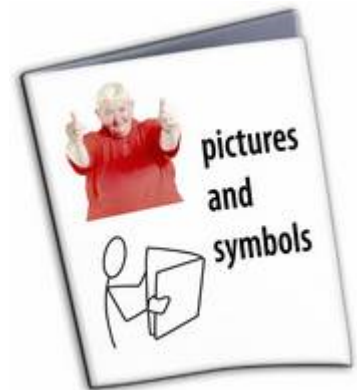
## Learning Disability Partnership Boards – Fifty-Seven (57) replies

- Three quarters (75%) thought Hate Crime was a problem in their area
- Most of the Partnership Boards had been told it was a problem by people themselves
- More than half said they don't write down Hate Crime against people with learning difficulties
- Only five (5) got the numbers from the police
- But again, quite a few more were doing something about the problem, like

Easy words reporting forms

Theatre groups

Training in schools



- Nearly half said they were going to have a plan about Hate Crime before the end of the year, but
- The other half weren't (28%) or didn't know (23%)

## Advocacy Groups – Forty-One replies (41)

- Nearly ALL the Advocacy Groups (82%) thought Hate Crime was a problem in their area
- Most had been told it was a problem by people themselves and a couple had been told by the police
- Most don't write down the numbers of Hate Crimes against people with learning difficulties – but it's not their job
- Half thought the numbers were collected by the police
- But, they wanted to tell us about the good things they were doing about Hate Crime, like....

Doing talks

Training for people with learning difficulties

Peer Support

Conferences



- Forty-two percent (42%) said they were going to have a plan about Hate Crime before the end of the year, but..
- More than half weren't (25%) or didn't know (32%)

## Part 5

### Statistical Context & Data from the Survey

The effects of Hate Crimes can be widespread and long lasting. Physical or verbal assaults, for example, may lead people to feel isolated and vulnerable, rendering many to curtail their movements, remain in their home, give up jobs or even move house.

It is the same for people with learning difficulties. In 1999 Mencap's report, *Living in Fear*<sup>1</sup>, identified that nine out of ten of those who participated in their study had been bullied in the past year. Almost half had been victims of verbal abuse, 29% had been threatened and 21% reported physical attacks (Mencap, 1999).

These numbers, however, are only part of the picture. Higgins (2006)<sup>2</sup>, reporting on the findings of research conducted by Capability Scotland and the Disability Rights Commission, noted that 20% of the people with learning difficulties in their sample of respondents were experiencing attacks on a weekly or more regular basis. Indeed, if the figures uncovered by Capability Scotland were replicated in England it would mean that some 32,000 adults experience Hate Crimes every week. That equates to more than 190 incidences every hour of every day.

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<sup>1</sup> Mencap (1999) *Living in Fear*. Mencap: London

<sup>2</sup> Higgins, K. (2006) Some Victims Less Equal Than Others. *SCOLAG Journal*, August 2006,

However, Higgins (2006) points to further data. Perpetrators of this crime against those with learning difficulties do not fit the profiles of those conducting race or homophobic Hate Crimes.

Instead, Higgins (2006) notes that nearly one quarter of attacks are carried out by those aged 45-64 years and that the majorities are aged between 16-44 years. Perpetrators cannot be labelled as children '*who don't know any better*'. Perpetrators of Hate Crimes against people with learning difficulties are generally adults leading everyday lives.

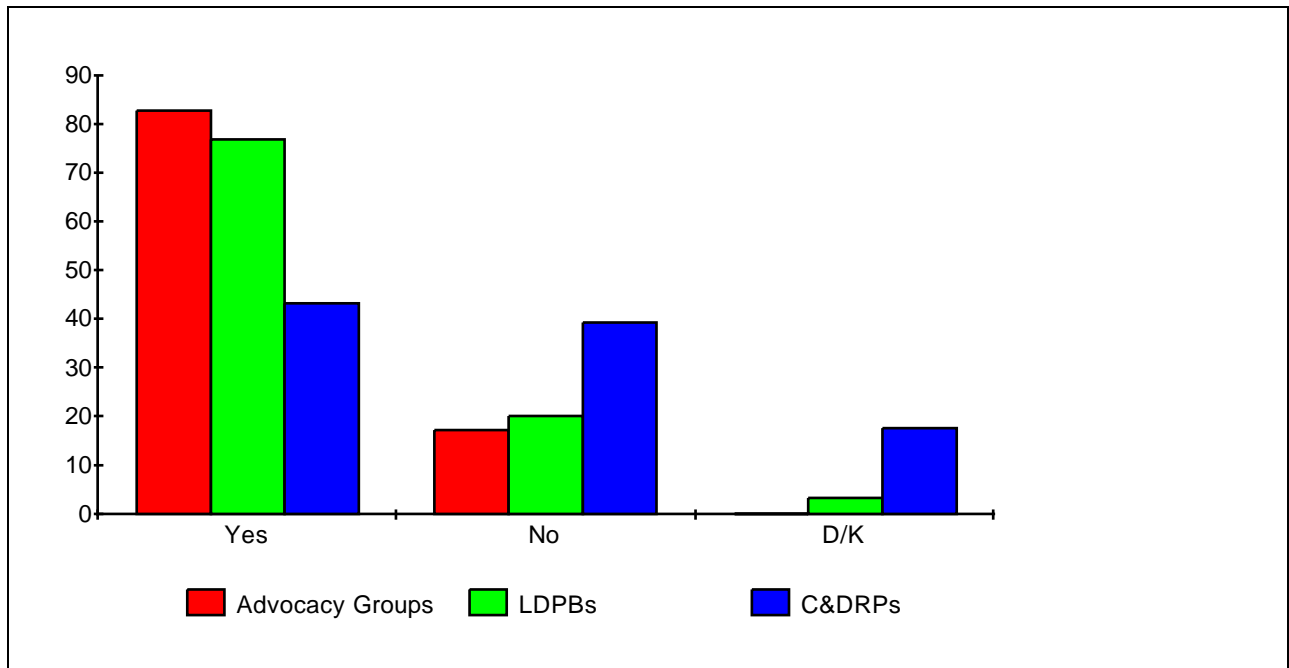
As a consequence there is a need to understand that strategies designed to educate and deter offenders need to be focused on adult perpetrators of abuse. Significantly this point was lost amongst those responding to the questionnaire. Here carers and organisations tended to focus upon addressing situations where people with learning difficulties come into contact with children and young people.

## Survey Results

### Is Hate Crime an Issue?

Whilst we have substantial evidence from national advocacy organisations about the nature and extent of Hate Crime, we asked the participants about whether their partnership boards/ organisation had identified Hate Crime as an issue. The results are listed in Table 1, below.

**Table 1: Is Hate Crime an Issue?**

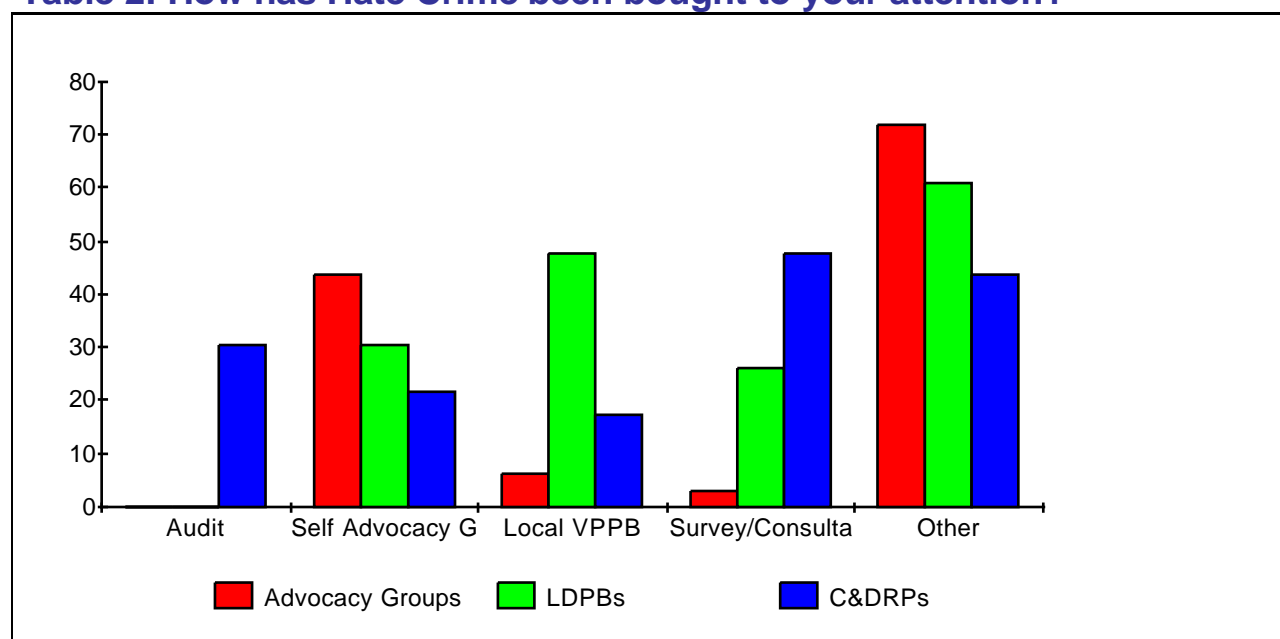


(Numbers are percentages)

This table highlights that of those that responded, more than 80% of advocacy groups and 75% of partnership boards had identified that Hate Crime was an issue. By comparison most Crime reduction partnerships had not (only 43.1%).

In this sense there appears to be a gap between the understanding of different parties in this area, and raises questions about how the different bodies relate and communicate to each other. There is a sense that the further away boards and organisations are from adults with learning difficulties, the less likely they are to acknowledge or appreciate the challenges that this group of people experience, and the nature or scale of the problem.

**Table 2: How has Hate Crime been brought to your attention?**

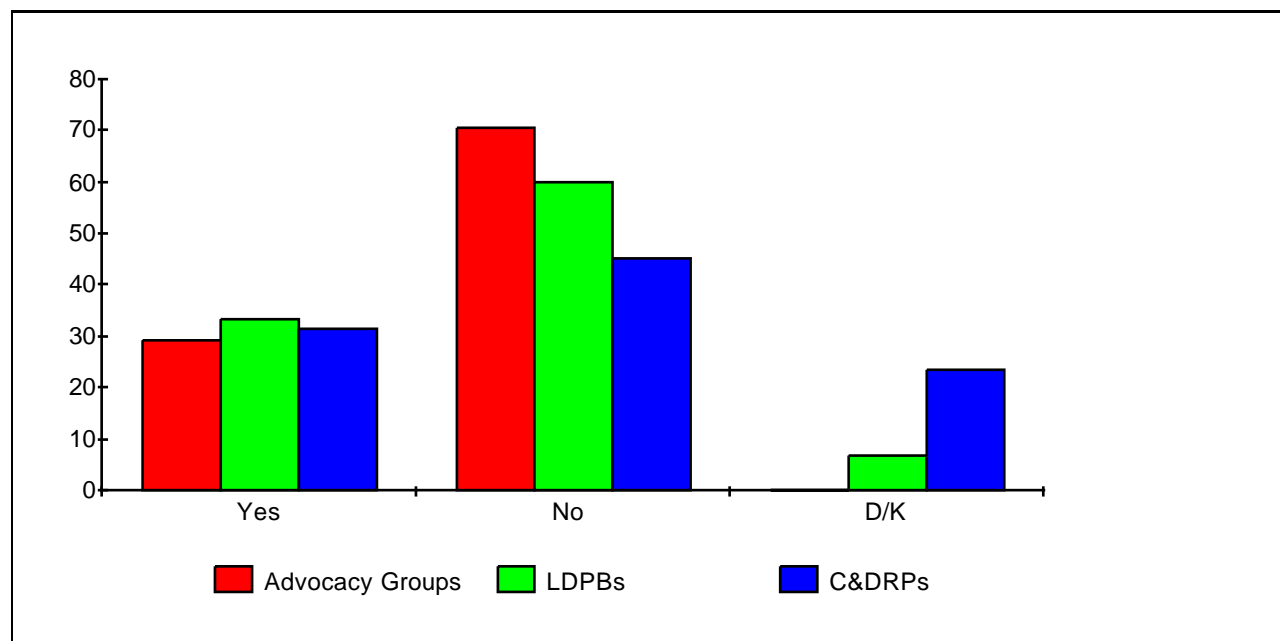


(Numbers are percentages)

In identifying Hate Crime as an issue it is clear that Community Safety Partnership have tended to use formal systems of assessing problems, whilst advocacy groups and partnership boards rely on self advocacy groups.

This lack of consistency and reliability reinforces the notion that the figures for Hate Crimes for people with learning difficulties are an 'iceberg', with the true size and scope being unknown. It is important to note that only 36% of the Community Safety Partnerships responding to the survey answered this question.

**Table 3: Do you collect data on Hate Crimes experienced by disabled people?**



(Numbers are percentages)

The sense that Hate Crime is unknown and unquantifiable is confirmed by Table 3, which highlights the lack of organisations collecting data on the nature and numbers of Hate Crimes in their areas.

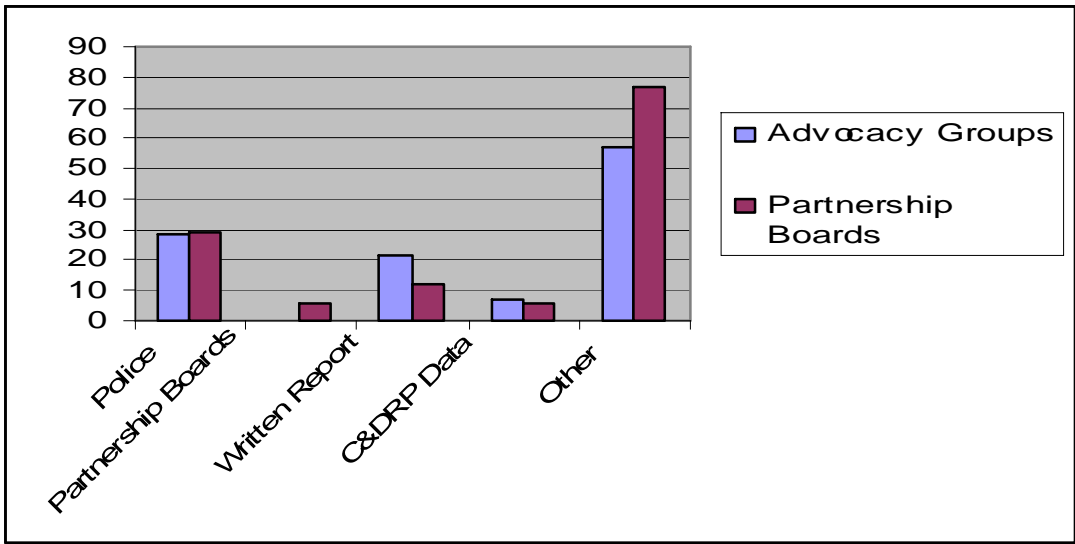
The problem, it seems, is for 'someone else' to deal with. Given that many organisations do not understand the scale or the nature of Hate Crimes in their areas, solutions for tackling Hate Crimes are unlikely to be based on any reliable evidence base.

The high number of Crime & Disorder Partnerships that do not know whether they collect figures on Hate Crimes committed against people with learning difficulties is problematic, and suggests that many are not monitoring this offence, and therefore do not seek to tackle the problem.

When asked those Advocacy Organisations and Partnership Boards who stated that they collected data how it was captured, The results are in Table 4 below.

Surprisingly, perhaps, there is a tendency for Advocacy Groups and Learning Disability Partnership Boards to rely on anecdote and experience from advocacy work.

**Table 4: How is the data captured?**



(Numbers are percentages)

**Tackling Hate Crime**

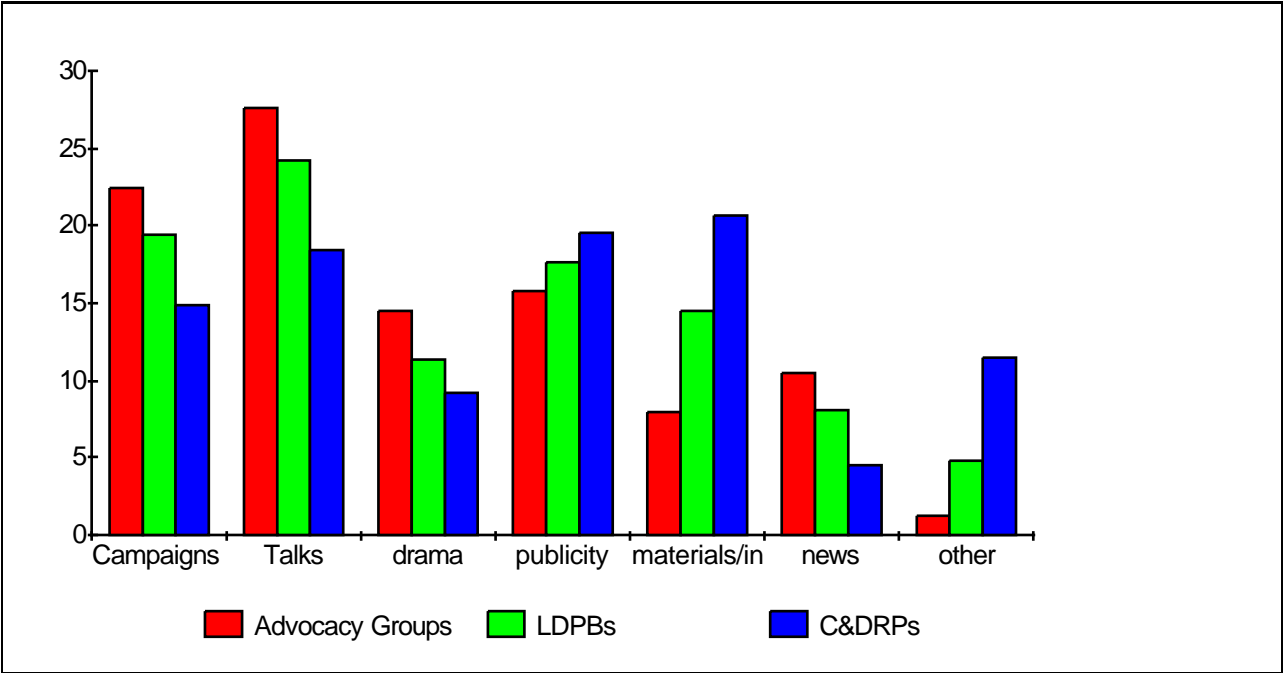
The different organisations were asked to identify the range of activities they have been engaged in to raise awareness of Hate Crimes.

Table 5, below, highlights that between the three types of organisations there is a split in what they do in order to raise awareness.

Advocacy groups and Partnership Boards tend to engage in campaigns, talks and drama, whilst Community Safety Partnerships have focused on publicity and information.

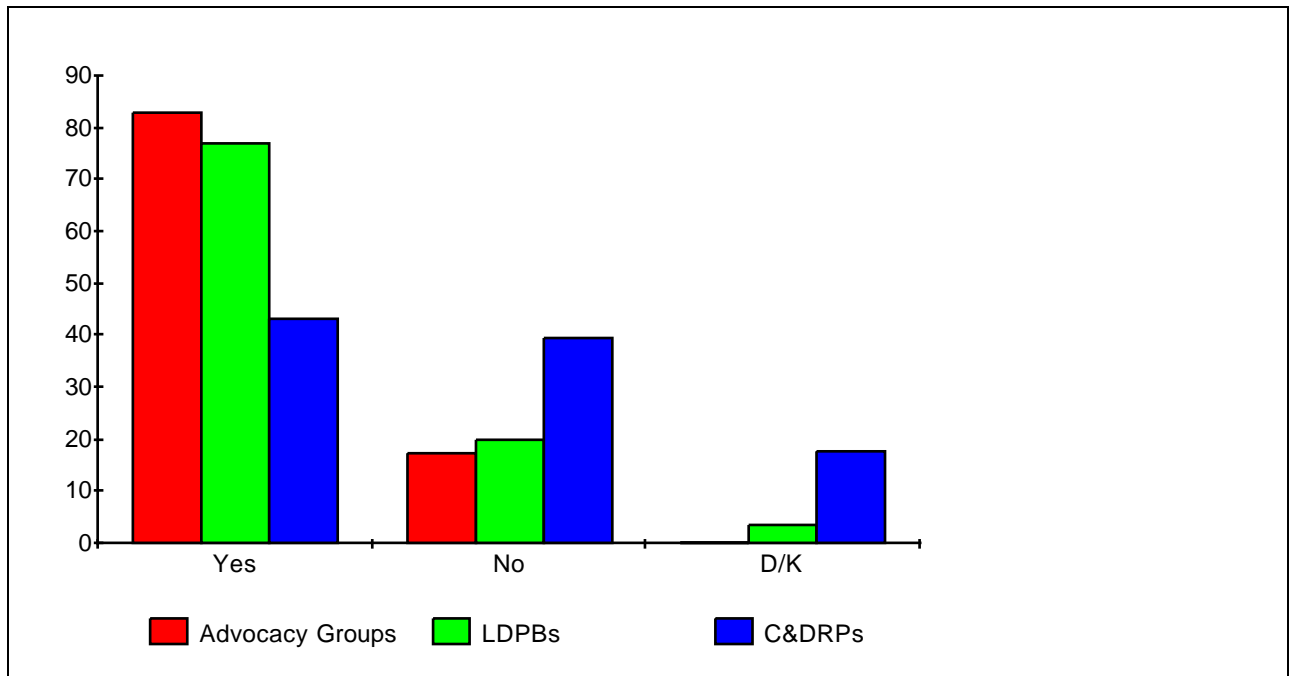
In some ways this split can be explained by the more strategic role that Community Safety Partnership play, which inevitably take them away from the 'grassroots'. Indeed, some Community Safety Partnerships may be funding the activities of advocacy groups and Learning Disability Partnership Boards.

**Table 5: Activities undertaken to raise awareness**



(Numbers are percentages)

**Table 6: Activities undertaken to increase reporting**



(Numbers are percentages)

Table 6 above, highlights that the different organisations have used a variety of activities in order to increase reporting.

Easy to read forms; verbal and third party reporting opportunities appear as the most commonly adopted methods.

### **Hate Crime Strategies**

The different organisations were asked about their strategies and plans in relation to Hate Crimes and adults with learning difficulties. The response was confusing and disappointing. From the evidence it appears that many organisations and partnership bodies conflated:

1. Hate Crimes with bullying and harassment, with some interpreting anti-bullying policies as Hate Crime policies

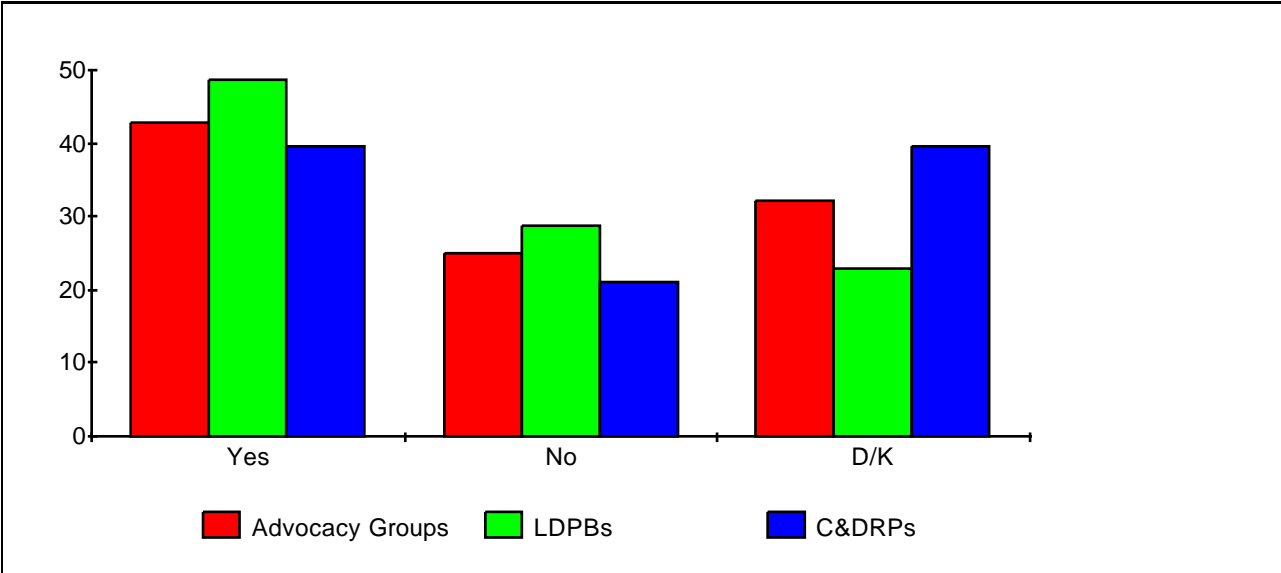
2. Hate Crimes against adults with learning difficulties as part of a general/wider policy against all Hate Crimes.
3. Hate Crime policies as Local Authority Vulnerable Adults Procedures.

As such it is difficult to assess how many organisations and bodies had Hate Crime policies that cater for the expressed needs of adults with learning difficulties.

We asked organisations and bodies whether they expected to have a policy by the end of the year. Across the three types of organisations we found that less than 50% expected to have such policies in place.

As Table 7, below, demonstrates Partnership Boards are more optimistic and clear about where they stand. The lack of certainty of the advocacy groups and Community Safety Partnerships about whether a policy will be in place is an indicator of a degree of uncertainty about any progress being made within their respective organisations.

**Table 7: Do you expect to have a Hate Crime Policy by the end of the year?**



(Numbers are percentages)

With thanks to:

Bev Duncan from the Valuing People Support Team played a massive role in sending out and collating the surveys. We are really grateful for her contribution

Samantha Clark and Pip Franklin from Inclusion North provided advice and information. Thank you

August 2007