

Garston students invited to Oxford University to present campaign to end child slavery

By James Legge | [Jun 26 2012](#)



YOUNG campaigners in Garston were invited to Oxford University to present a project about child slavery.

The students, from the Enterprise South Liverpool Academy, were chosen to address a national forum with their work, raising awareness of forced child labour in Uzbekistan, today (tues) at The Said Business School.

The event marks the launch of 2020 Education, a campaign focusing on getting young people thinking about the challenges their generation will face in the 21st century. Students from ten schools across the country will also present their ideas, all of which will be made into a programme for TV and radio, presented by Rageh Omaar.

The project, called Cut Cotton Crimes: Can You Feel The Sadness In Your Clothes?, is run by the youngsters, working with Liverpool International Slavery Museum.

They were shocked when they visited the museum's 2011 exhibition about the government-sanctioned child labour in the Uzbeki cotton industry.

Young people their age in Uzbekistan are regularly pulled out of school and forced to pick cotton for 70 hours a week in terrible conditions. A third of Uzbeki cotton is bought by Europeans, giving £350 million for the country's corrupt government. Many high street shops sell clothes made with the cotton.

As part of their project the students studied successful campaigns closer to home, like Hillsborough Justice and Kick Racism Out of Football.

They also sold Cut Cotton Crimes wristbands and T-shirts, raising money for charities dealing with the trade, and spread the word in nearby schools and at an international conference for human rights.

One member of the 2020 campaign is Nicholas Mellor, founder and patron of the charity Merlin.

He said: "The project at the Enterprise South Liverpool Academy shows the positive results which can be achieved by proactive young people.

"The students have shown a keen insight into the importance of gaining exposure for an issue and how local action can make a global difference."

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