



Press Release

Teenage Kicks 2: Reality Bites

'Our young people need to feel that they have a voice and that they are able to not only express themselves but that their voices will be heard and noted. It's a great way to inspire confidence, self-assurance and creativity. That's why it's so important to encourage young people to take part in events such as this.' **Malorie Blackman**

Following the success of the 2009 Teenage Kicks event, Random House Children's Books (RHCBS) have joined forces with the High Wycombe HeadSpace group to organise Teenage Kicks 2: Reality Bites, an evening event for teenagers and librarians.

HeadSpace is a Reading Agency initiative that involves young people in designing and running their own vibrant spaces in libraries and youth centres.

Random House Children's Books have invited three of their top authors for teenagers; Malorie Blackman, Bali Rai and Jenny Downham to take part in a panel event to discuss writing for teenagers. Here is what they had to say about the event:

"Teenage Kicks gets young people involved with books and reading and that is something that I support wholeheartedly. To be part of a POSITIVE news story about British teenagers is too good an opportunity to miss. It's also great fun!" **Bali Rai**

"I am struck over and over by the intelligence and curiosity with which so many young readers approach books. The opportunity to meet with them and talk about their reading (and often their writing) lives, is always a great privilege. I am hugely looking forward to it!" **Jenny Downham**

10 teenagers from the HeadSpace of High Wycombe library in Buckinghamshire are working with RHCBS to organise the event. They have been involved from the beginning and have designed invitations and posters and will attend on the night to introduce, chair and film the evening for their website. The teenagers will be working with RHCBS to digitally promote the event via twitter, social networking sites and the Reading Agency site 'groupthing'.

Karen Hills is the librarian at High Wycombe who helps run the HeadSpace group and Charlotte is one of the teenagers involved in organising the night, here is what they have to say about the event:

'Teenage Kicks is a wonderful and exciting opportunity for young people to meet fantastic authors on a personal level. The planning of the event has given the group experience of working as a team and they have had to consider that their work will have an impact on the whole event. The event also gives the chance to enhance interviewing techniques and public speaking skills. I believe it is something they will remember for a long time and look back on with pride.' Karen Hills

'Planning the event was fun and it made us think about what other people might like. I can't believe I'm going to meet the authors of such fantastic books, I think its going to be a great night.' Charlotte (14)

Books will be on sale on the night and Malorie, Bali and Jenny will be available to sign copies.

The Teenage Kicks evening will be held on Thursday 24th March 2011 from 6.30 -8.30 pm at Twenty Restaurant, Random House Offices, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA

Here is what author Keith Gray and one of the teen organisers from the 2009 event had to say about the last Teenage Kicks evening:

"It changed my opinion on who can be an author. One of the authors said that anybody can be an author and I did not think of that before." **Young person from Crawley HeadSpace Group**

"It was great to meet so many clever, witty, thoughtful, exciting young people who could create such a genuine buzz for good books. I've decided never to be involved with sessions run by grown-ups again." **Keith Gray**

Notes to editors

The Reading Agency is an independent charity working to inspire more people to read more. It is funded by the Arts Council and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. (www.readingagency.org.uk)

RHCB is a founding member of Children's Reading Partners through which they get access to HeadSpace. For more information on the HeadSpace initiative please visit The Reading Agency Website: <http://www.readingagency.org.uk/young/headspace/>

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