

THE THINGS WE CARRY

A GROUP POEM CO-CREATED BY YOUNG LEADERS AND REGIONAL LEADS WITH
MATT ABBOTT

WE ARE...

Strong but feel weak

Silenced by the people we need to listen

We are hopeful, with no hope

Proud of our town

Lost in our history

We are outspoken

Opinionated

Intellectually curious

We are hardworking

Ambitious

Creative

Passionate

Socially aware

A bottle of opportunities and colours

We say "chicken and a can of coke"

Chocka

Boss

Sound

Rkid

Lad

Scran

Bizzies

Belter

Kidda

You say speak properly!

We say ***this is speaking properly to us!***

I CARRY MY HEAD HIGH

I carry my phone like a lifeline

I carry my hat on my head

I carry my Lucozade

My bus card

I carry my neurodivergence - my mental health

My glasses

My headphones

The weight of my future

I carry a passion for footy the sound of the crowd, singing at a match

I carry my hopes and dreams

I carry the determination to come out on top in the face of adversity

I carry my hairbands

My shoes

I carry my Janner Accent

I carry my responsibilities

I carry my trust

I carry my respect

I carry the sound of footsteps I don't trust

I carry a knot of worry in my stomach

I carry the burden of school

You carry a knife to keep yourself safe

But I'm the one stopped by police

And I'm the one who feels unsafe

When my bag is searched

And I get turned away by the bus driver

Just because I am young

I carry PTSD

I carry my backpack

Hope in small, hidden pockets

I carry my constant need for perfection

Constant thoughts of expectations and pressure

I carry my lip gloss

I carry my bad habit of overthinking and stressing

I carry my internal struggles

A fluffy pillow for comfort

I carry my gold earrings in both ears

I carry my curls and the journey of loving my hair

I carry my history

My family I have never met, in my DNA

I carry things that remind me of the people I love

Comments of having a big family

I carry dreams, I carry me

I'm carrying **pressure**

Too much **pressure**

Pressure

Pressure

Pressure to belong

WE REFUSE TO...

Put up or shut up

We refuse to make ourselves smaller to fit your mould

We refuse stay quiet in the face of injustice

We refuse to be stereotyped and scapegoated

We refuse the pressure of perfection

We refuse give up

Or back down

WE PLEDGE TO...

Wear what we want

Feel comfortable

Use our voice to speak up for others

Share our research to help influence change

Take pride in our communities and our shared histories

We are a sign of change awaiting to occur to shift narratives and break stereotypes

We carry the stories of young people who need a platform to be heard

Whilst also trying to navigate the constantly evolving world and the intersection between our identities

We are change makers and leaders that carry recommendations and solutions to improving the world around us