



VARY US

EXPLORING DIVERSITY
INTERCULTURALISM
IDENTITY

Published by

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Introduction

There are many changes taking place in the cultural makeup of Ireland as people from various countries and different cultural backgrounds move here and establish their lives and homes in communities. In this context, traditional Irish culture, values and norms are changing significantly as our society becomes more diverse and multicultural. These changes pose new opportunities as well as challenges to both 'established' communities and 'new' communities alike.

When facing fundamental change we all tend to rely on 'a story' of how and why things are changing as this helps us make sense of our own place in such change. Young people have had insufficient support in exploring, debating and putting these changes in context and at times can feel out of place and uncomfortable as a result, often with negative consequences.

This resource pack encourages young people, youth workers and facilitators to work together to explore and debate the themes of identity, the cultural and social changes taking place in our communities and how we can respond positively and creatively to these changes.

Using VaryUs

Any programme that explores identity, attitudes and beliefs about 'ourselves' and 'others' will pose challenges and difficulties for any group; for this reason it is important to have a good understanding of your group and its dynamics before beginning to use VaryUs.

Read through each module and its introduction to get a feel for it. Before deciding on which module to explore consider the following questions:

- How well do the members of the group know each other?
- Do any of the members have an issue which may make some of these activities difficult to engage in?
- In considering this what support do I need to have in place before running the activity?
- Do I need to prepare the group to help them participate?
- What interests does the group have and could they be used creatively?

The pack is specifically designed to develop young people's understanding of the changes that are happening around them. In designing activities for your group dip in and out or adapt the activities to suit your circumstances. VaryUs offers suggestions as to how activities could be adapted to suit your group but don't feel limited to these if you have your own ideas.

Each Module has a particular theme relating to the issue of interculturalism and while they are not designed to be run 'back to back' the best results will be achieved if the activities are used in sequence (we suggest that they are modified to suit your own circumstance). Equally, you might decide to build your own programme using elements from this resource plus additional materials.

Who Are We

The City of Dublin Youth Service Board is the youth development agency of the City of Dublin VEC. Our mission is to promote youth work and volunteerism and enable young people to realise their potential within their communities and a changing society. Our role is to promote, support and co-ordinate the development of voluntary youth clubs, community based youth projects and youth services in the city of Dublin. CDYSB administers grant aid on behalf of the Government.

80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World is a development and human rights education NGO working with people of all ages in exploring and debating justice, human rights and human development issues and challenges. 80:20 works extensively with young people in supporting them to actively engage with such issues and to ensure that their voice is increasingly heard.

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- The YMCA
- Lourdes Youth and Community Centre (LYCS)
- SWAN Youth Project
- St. Michael's Youth Project

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The ideas, opinions and comments made in this publication are entirely the responsibility of its author/s and do not necessarily represent or reflect Irish Aid policy.

VaryUs: a detailed outline

Making Me (7 sessions)

	Activities (approx. time in minutes)	Key ideas
1: My Community	1: toilet roll game (15) 2: a moving debate: hopes, fears and expectations (15) 3: thinking about language (60) 4: mapping my community (60)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ What's important to the group ■ Positive and negative language ■ Exploring the local community and highlighting its identity
2 : Stories	1: who's the boss here then? (15) 2: my story (45) 3: my area and me (40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ Images of ourselves ■ Exploring the local community more
3 : Images	1: sharks (15) 2: my image (45) 3: me through the eyes of others (40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ Images and their importance ■ How we see others and how they see us
4: Values	1: the magic carpet (15) 2: values (40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ Exploring what we value
5: Groups	1: the tower (45) 2: belonging to groups (40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ The importance we attach to being in a group
6: Exploring Conflict Resolution	1: the chair game (30) 2: a moving debate: conflict is ... (30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ Debating the issue of conflict
7: Conflict and Change	1: the conflict tree (150) 2: conflict toolkit (30) 3: squares, circles, triangles (45) 4: module review and evaluation (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysing the nature of conflict ■ What makes conflict worse? ■ Resolving conflict ■ Reviewing the work so far

In and Out (5 sessions)

	Activities (approx. time in minutes)	Key ideas
1: Introducing In and Out	1: anyone who (20) 2: a moving debate: hopes, fears and expectations (15) 3: agreeing appropriate language (45) 4: what's my role (30)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ Debating what we like and don't like ■ Discussing language again ■ Exploring roles in society
2: Exploring Discrimination and Exclusion	1: masters and servants (15) 2: what is discrimination (40) 3: going shopping (45)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ The nature of discrimination ■ Stereotyping young people
3: Categories, Labels and Stereotypes	1: the memory game (10) 2: categorizing: group discussion (15) 3: bursting bubbles (60)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group building ■ How we categorise things ■ Challenging stereotypes
4: Exploring Power	1: conscious alley (60) 2: big power, small power (45)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How our decisions are influenced ■ Power and how it is used
5: What Would You Change?	1: group discussion (20) 2: group discussion (40) 3: group discussion (30) 4: review and evaluation (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exploring what can be changed and how? ■ Assessing the groups view of its power to challenge and change things ■ Reviewing the work so far

What's it to Me? (5 sessions)

Activities (approx. time in minutes) Key ideas

1: Mixing It Up	1: chow mein, curry or coddle? (45) 2: is your culture Irish? (45) 3: the iceberg: exploring culture (60)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How Irish culture is changing ■ International influences in Irish culture ■ Exploring how much of culture is visible or invisible
2: Where in the World?	1: mapping cultures (30) 2: profiling cultures (60) 3: group presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where people who now live in Ireland have come from ■ International cultures in Ireland ■ Presenting the research results
3: What Is Interculturalism?	1: defining interculturalism (30) 2: exploring diversity (60)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What does interculturalism mean for everyday life? ■ Understanding the idea of diversity
4: Imagining Culturally Friendly Places	1: project or school survey (120)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is our project or school culturally friendly?
5: Where Do I Stand?	1: where do I stand? (40) 2: review and evaluation (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where do I stand on a whole range of ideas and issues? ■ Review of the work to date

Key Values and Concepts

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism describes a community or society made up of people from various cultural backgrounds. These cultures may come into contact with each other through work, shopping and education but the members of these various cultures rarely come together to create shared cultural experiences. Various cultures can co-exist side by side but largely separately from each other – the degree to which cultures mix together is limited.

Interculturalism

Interculturalism occurs when cultures come together to create shared cultural experiences and values. This usually occurs when groups have a strong sense of their own identity and culture and value what is good in it as well as recognising what is not so good. This happens on a regular basis in music, art, food etc. but it also occurs in many societies such as the UK, the US and Brazil through marriage, schooling, sports, literature, law making.

Intercultural Education

Intercultural education is an educational process that explores key issues such as identity, culture, integration, discrimination, diversity. It is often as much about how we feel about our own culture as how we feel about other cultures. Even in a society with a dominant culture e.g. Ireland, various sub-cultures and groups exist leaving some feeling excluded.

There are many key attitudes, understandings and skills that can positively support intercultural encounters including the development of a sense of one's own identity, a better understanding of the complexities of our society and exploring our own and other people's culture as well as the core ideas of human dignity, human rights and equality and the principle of non-discrimination. Developing good interpersonal and conflict resolution skills and learning to accept others as equals are also vital.

Identity

Our identity is formed and shaped by many influences - the family, location and culture we grow up in, our day to day experiences and interactions with those around us and the meanings and understandings we create around these. Identity is fluidic, dynamic and ever changing – it is seldom fixed or static. Most of us have, in reality, many identities – some received and some chosen.

Values

Our values are a reflection of our culture, our family and community background as well as our belief systems - they are learned and reinforced through our day to day interactions. They are a core part of our personality on which we base many of our decisions and often they are unconscious.

Prejudice

Is a set of pre-judgements (sometimes positive, sometimes negative) or beliefs that we may hold about others who we may see as different for various reasons including, race, gender, ethnicity, ability or sexual orientation. Everyone of us pre-judge others and situations – it is important to recognise this and to try to avoid adopting ill-informed judgements that become negative prejudices which undermine our interactions with others to our own disadvantage as well as that of others.

Discrimination

Discrimination can be described as prejudice in action. It generally occurs when one person goes beyond prejudice and begins to act in a discriminatory way towards others excluding them from activities, society, entitlements or equal treatment. Discrimination against certain groups is often ingrained in many societies and organisations and can impact on these groups in indirect and yet, very real ways.

Racism

Racism is an extreme form of discrimination based around prejudiced beliefs and, crucially, practices about the perceived superiority or inferiority of another due to race or ethnic grounds.

Equality

Equality is a value and a belief which asserts that all people, without exception, are born equal and have equal rights and equal responsibilities that accompany such rights.

Stereotype

A generalisation, often exaggerated or oversimplified which can sometimes be negative or offensive, that is used to describe or distinguish a group usually based on assumed group characteristics or behaviour.

Using VaryUs

Facilitation of groups – The activities and ideas in VaryUs are best delivered by two facilitators who can remain involved with the group over the course of a full specific module (this team of facilitators may change from module to module). If at all possible try to ensure that the two facilitators are available to support the young people outside of the timetabled activities if needed.

Explore your own ideas first – before exploring these issues or using this resource with young people, it is very important to explore and clarify your own ideas and feelings about the issues covered. Each and every one of us have views and emotions around these issues and it is useful (indeed necessary) to explore them before we begin to work with others. As part of your preparation for using this resource, it will be productive to organise a workshop with other youth workers and teachers to explore and debate the issues.

Thinking through many of the issues and being prepared for the challenges that will arise (and being prepared to share your own ideas and thoughts) is a necessary and vital part of the process. Most of the issues dealt with in Being The Difference are ‘contested’ issues – there are no immediate right and wrong answers and there are a great variety of views as to what the solutions/answers might be to the issues raised.

Be familiar with the main ideas and arguments of this resource – make sure that you become familiar and comfortable with the main ideas and arguments, as well as the values behind intercultural education; read each module and prepare the activities well; be aware of issues that might exist within the group or the community which can make some of the issues sensitive and plan how to manage possible difficulties as they arise.

Be prepared to appropriately handle conflict within your group – some of the issues discussed are controversial and almost everyone has a view on many of them. These views regularly clash. Remind the group of the basic rules of discussion and debate; make sure no-one individual or individuals are singled out for criticism or ridicule; try to ensure that everyone is given equal time and consideration around their views and remind everyone that ‘free speech’ is not absolute but comes with limitations and responsibilities, including legal ones – such as laws against inciting racial hatred.

Remember to keep materials produced in one session for use later – some of the materials the group will produce in one session are needed for later ones, so make sure to keep them safely and that you have adequate storage space so you have them when needed.

Challenge deliberately insulting language and/or behaviour – the language or behaviour we all use when discussing the issues can be controversial and while it is important that people feel free to express themselves, deliberately insulting language or threatening behaviour should not go unchallenged. Everyone is entitled to appropriate freedom of expression but that freedom is by no means absolute, it must be ‘balanced’ against the rights of others and against the obligation not to promote or support any form of racial prejudice or discrimination. This is a key human rights principle as outlined in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD – this international Convention was created to challenge and oppose behaviour

and action that discriminates against individuals and groups because of their 'racial' background – a discussion of CERD is a useful group activity – it can be found at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/>).

Encourage the group to stay involved over time – VaryUs uses a range of participative educational methodologies – these are unlikely to be fully successful if group members come and go especially when the activities build on each other week by week.

Be creative – try to be as creative as you can – use the ideas in VaryUs but adapt them to your own situation and to the needs of your group. Use your own knowledge of the group and its interests when planning the programme. Don't be afraid to add in your own ideas or to modify the programme. Should particular issues in VaryUs generate extra interest or discussion or need to be explored further, feel free to change or amend the programme. For example in one feedback session while developing this resource a suggestion was made to use BEBO to explore how young people view the issue of identity - the group could explore how a BEBO page of their community might look.

Guide and challenge – guide the activities and discussions, don't be afraid to share your own ideas and viewpoints and remember it is important to challenge young people on these issues and be ready to be challenged in return. Emphasise that there are no 'correct' and 'incorrect' ideas – there is just a need to appropriately discuss and debate the issues while respecting everyone's rights.

Action Plans – if through the process of debate and discussion the participants identify steps they could take to put their ideas into action, the facilitator should support them to develop these ideas. If action plans then begin to emerge, it is important to focus on the support the young people would need in order to begin any processes of change within their communities.

Time management – throughout VaryUs, we have offered an approximate time needed for each activity but this will vary from group to group. Feel free to develop your own timing to suit the needs of your particular group.

Other contacts – the programme may also benefit greatly from extended linkages outside your youth group or school with other organisations, community groups and families.

Module 1 - Making Me

Introduction

This module introduces some of the core issues associated with Interculturalism and consists of 7 sessions each with its own set of aims.

Aims

In this module, the group will begin to familiarise themselves with each other, to think about language and its importance, to reflect on the nature of the community in which they live and to relate it to their own lives, to discuss how they see themselves and how others might see them and discuss the values people have and how values may come into conflict with each other. Specifically, the group will:

- Explore its hopes, fears and expectations as a group
- Discuss how language can influence and shape behaviour
- Map their own community and explore their own individual stories
- Explore their own images of themselves individually and then collectively and discuss how others might see them
- Identify the importance of values and identity
- Begin to explore how conflict arises and how it can be managed
- Improve their listening skills

Session 1 – My Community

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aims:

- To have fun, get to know each other and begin to build trust
- To set some ground rules
- To explore how community affects identity
- To address questions or concerns the group might have

Introduction: (10 minutes)

Introduce the session by outlining one of the core aims of the programme as outlined in the introduction; this session attempts to build up and explore a picture of what makes us who we are and how other people may see us. The activities in this and in many other sessions help us practice key skills which are important in group situations.

Activity 1: The Toilet Roll Game (15 minutes)

This activity is an ice breaker and helps the participants to introduce themselves to each other in a fun way.

Materials required: a toilet roll.

How to proceed – in a circle pass around the toilet roll, explain to the group that they can take as many sheets as they like but they must take at least one. When all the sheets have been taken, explain that for every sheet, the taker must tell the group one thing about themselves. Take turns to go around the group until everyone has shared their information.

Activity 2: A Moving Debate. Hopes, Fears and Expectations (15 minutes)

This activity is an active way to get groups to think about what the group's contract might look like.

Materials required: prepared statements on behaviour in a group.

How to proceed – prepare seven or eight statements which you feel might reflect people's attitudes to taking part in a group – some sample statements are listed below:

- When in a group it's important to listen to other people
- When working in a group, I don't like being slagged or bullied
- When in a group, it's important we have time for a regular break
- When in a group, I like to give everything a go, even if I feel shy
- In a group, it's important that everyone has a chance to be heard

The debate begins by labelling one side of the room 'agree' and the opposite side 'disagree'. When a statement is read out, each participant moves to a side of the room depending on whether or not they agree or disagree with that statement. They can then discuss their choice with a partner or with the whole group.

Based on this discussion and debate, the group can then agree a set of common ground rules which reflect the choices and wishes of the group members. This 'contract' can be used in later sessions to assess whether the group is abiding by its 'rules'.

Activity 3: Thinking About Language (60 minutes)

This activity is designed to discuss and debate the importance of language use in a group and seeks to establish a contract on how language will be used in discussion and debate.

Materials required: poster paper plus markers

How to proceed – introduce this session by discussing with the group how our words and language and the messages they send out (or how they are received) can significantly influence how a group interacts together.

Divide the participants into small groups of 3 or 4 and ask each group to think about words and phrases that can create positive and/or negative feelings or responses in any group situation. Ask each group to identify 3 positive and 3 negative words or phrases. Examples could include words or phrases that 'put down' a group (e.g. *stupid or thick, lazy, stuck up etc.*) or that 'lift up' a group (e.g. *cool, smart, sharp etc.*).

Get each group to feed back to the whole group and record their answers on a flipchart and try to identify common ideas or suggestions. Now ask the whole group to brainstorm the words or phrases it feels could be used by others to describe their group and to think about whether such words or phrases might be positive or negative and why? Ask them to also think about how they might feel being described or labelled in this way. Finally, ask them to think about the words or phrases they might use to describe or label people outside their group and how those outside their group might feel about the labels?

Finish the activity by getting the group to make a contract about the language they will use within the group when talking to and about each other – don't make the list too long and make sure to display the agreement at future sessions. Tell them that the issue of language and how it is used will be discussed further in later sessions. If problems arise during further sessions about language, make sure to return to the agreement and discuss it over again.

Activity 4: Mapping my Community (60 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of having participants explore their local community; the objective in this activity is to begin to build up an understanding of what and who makes up a community and how that understanding of community is changing all the time.

Time: 1 hour or longer depending on the group, the time available and the level of interest – you could organise several sessions on this activity.

Materials required: art and craft materials and a map or outline of the area.

How to proceed – make a rough map of the area using photographs (the group could also take some photographs of the area) or the materials you have assembled- it doesn't need to be to scale or exact but it should be helpful to the group later when sharing their stories. How the map is created depends on the interests and skills of the group – they might choose to design the map with photographs, art materials, cuttings from

magazines or newspapers or they could draw the map or they could use modelling clay. If someone is from outside the immediate area or from another country, adapt the activity and invite them to create a map of their own area – it can be compared with others to identify similarities and differences (it is important to highlight the similarities and differences in how people describe and understand their area or community).

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Highlight some of the key points that arose in mapping the local area(s) and remind participants of the 'contract' negotiated. Very briefly introduce the following session.

Note: it is important to keep the maps of the community for use in the next session and in other later sessions.

Session 2 – Stories

Time: approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Aims:

- To work co-operatively together as a group
- To share an experience of growing up in an area
- To practice active listening

Activity 1: Who's the boss here then? (10 - 15 minutes)

Open with a game to help people relax - there are many examples of games throughout VaryUs or try the following activity.

How to proceed –

- Ask for a volunteer and send them out of the room
- Form the whole group into a circle, agree who will be the 'boss' for this first round and get them to start an action such as scratching their head, making a wave, striking a pose etc.
- Everyone then copies that action, tell them that the volunteer will now return and that they must quickly copy the actions suggested by the boss
- Get the boss to change the action frequently and get everyone to follow these actions
- Now invite the volunteer back into the room, have them stand in the middle of the circle and guess who the boss here is – if they fail, they must complete a forfeit (sing, tell a joke etc.)
- If they guess, the boss then leaves the room and the activity recommences etc.

Activity 2: My Story (45 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of encouraging participants to explore who they are.

Materials required: the map(s) created during **Session 1, Activity 4** and art and craft materials.

How to proceed – Begin this session by asking the group to recall their work from the previous week. If a new member has joined ask for a volunteer to bring them up to speed on what has happened.

Ask the group members to work on their own to create an image of who they are. This can be done in any manner they feel is appropriate using for example, a photograph or photo collage, their name doodled or drawn on paper or a printout of their Bebo or Facebook page. Then ask them to look at the 'community map' from the previous week and think of a place that has meaning or has an important story for them. Ask each person to place their image on or beside the location that is important to them.

Ask the group to pair off in two's or three's. In these groups ask them to explain to others why the area they picked had significance to them? When everyone has had the opportunity to discuss their stories ask them to feed them back to the bigger group if they feel comfortable doing so.

Note: it is important to keep the images of each participant for use in session four and in other later sessions.

Activity 3: My Area and Me (40 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of encouraging participants to explore who they are in their community and builds on Activity 1.

Materials required: the area map already created **Session 1, Activity 4**, plus a flip chart, markers and pens.

How to proceed – drawing on the ideas and topics that emerge from the discussion in **Session 2, Activity 2**, lead a group discussion about their area:

- Are there other things that make up my area apart from physical space e.g. what accents do people have, what do they do to relax, how do they celebrate events?
- Is it a new community or have the same families lived there for a long time?
- Did the area influence who I am? How?
- What's good about living in my area/what's not so good?

If someone in the group did not grow up in the area, adapt the exercise so that they can include a story about where they grew up and in the final discussion let them discuss the similarities and differences between their old and their new community. Note the main points of the discussion.

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Summarise some of the common points raised by participants in telling their story or that of their area e.g. family, friends, school, football pitch, cinema. Explain that in the next session, they will explore the question of identity in greater detail.

Session 3 – Images

Time: approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Aims:

- To have fun
- To look at identity in more depth
- To explore how we create an image of ourselves to show to the outside world

Activity 1: Sharks (15 minutes)

Open with the game 'Sharks' which is a fun ice breaker and team building game.

Materials required: newspaper, music.

How to proceed – place one sheet of newspaper on the ground for every member of the group. Play some music and when the music stops everyone needs to be standing on a sheet of paper rather than the floor. Alternatively the group can walk around the room and when you shout 'Sharks' everyone needs to get on a sheet of paper. Anyone not standing on a sheet is out.

In the next round begin by removing a sheet. The participants can help each other by sharing their sheet with one another. After each round remove another sheet until it becomes more difficult to find space on a sheet. When there are 2 sheets left remove one sheet and tear the final sheet in half; continue to tear the last sheet until there is one winner.

Activity 2: My Image (45 minutes)

This is a creative way of having participants explore their own image.

Materials required: the area map already created by the group in **Session 1, Activity 4**, art and craft materials, pictures from magazines and brand labels.

How to proceed – ask the group to sift through a selection of images such as clothes, phones, friends, family, pets, brand labels, sporting celebrities and musicians. Each person should have their own selection of images which somehow represent who they are. Introduce a game based on a points system where images that are unique to an individual are awarded one point. On a poster page, invite them to draw the outline of a person and then place on it:

- Images which somehow illustrate how they think other people see them – these should be placed outside the persons outline
- Images that represent how they see themselves – these should be placed inside the persons outline
- If the images are similar place them on the outline of the person

Now compare all the images with each other. Lead a discussion based on the following questions.

- What images are important in how we feel others see us?
- What images are important in how we see ourselves?
- What are the most unique images used?
- Are you influenced by how you think others see you?

The individual with the most points for unique images is declared the winner.

Activity 3: Me Through the Eyes of Others (40 minutes)

This exercise focuses on how our identity is also a reflection of how others see us and builds on Activity 1.

Materials required: the map of the area(s) created by the group in **Session 1, Activity 4** and a handout of the groups of people listed below.

How to proceed – ask the participants to think about the following groups of people:

- *People in our community* – shop keepers, security guards, neighbours, sports coaches, youth workers, others?
- *People close to us* – parents, siblings, relations, friends, peers, others?
- *People who have authority* – Gardai, teachers, employers, others?

Ask the group to note the places on the map where they are most likely to meet someone from the above groups and ask the following questions:

- Which of these individuals do they see as authority figures?
- What authority do they feel they have over them?
- Do they think everyone in the community sees young people in the same way?
- What might be the different stereotypes that adults hold about young people?
- What might be the different stereotypes that young people hold about adults or other young people?
- Does this affect how adults or young people are treated?
- Which places do young people feel most comfortable with, where it is easiest to be themselves and why?

Using the groups of people listed above; ask participants how they think others might see them individually. Do they think other people see them differently from how they see themselves? Which of the groups above might have the perception closest to how they see themselves? Do they think their identity might change depending on who is looking at them?

Conclusion: Finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Summarise some of the common perceptions among the group and highlight some of the differences also. Briefly introduce the next session and the fact that it focuses on values and how they influence identity.

Session 4 – Values

Time: approximately 1 hour.

Aims:

- To look at the role values play in shaping our identity
- To think about the importance of values in our relationships with others

Activity 1: The Magic Carpet (15 minutes)

This is a fun activity that develops teambuilding, team co-operation, communication skills and is an exploration of roles within groups

Materials required: A large rug/towel/mat - big enough so all group members can stand on it.

How to proceed – have all members of the group stand on the mat together and without anyone standing off the mat they must try to turn the mat over to the other side. This is a difficult group task but it can be achieved. If the group are finding it frustrating one or two participants may step off the mat but get them to stay involved by helping the group with ideas or encouraging them in their efforts.

After the task lead a group discussion on what roles people took on. Some of the roles that people might have included being the carer, the thinker, the communicator, the leader or the motivator. Were all these roles important in completing the task? How did the individuals find it? Was it difficult or easy?

Activity 2: Values (40 minutes)

This activity is a creative way to explore how young people's self image and values are interlinked.

Materials required: the map of the area created by the group in **Session 1, Activity 4**, plus art and craft materials.

How to proceed – using the map created by the group in **Session 1, Activity 4**, ask the group members to choose a place on the map where they feel most at home and place their image from **Session 2, Activity 1**, beside this space. Now ask each member to look at their image and to consider if it reflects who they are. Is there anything they would add or take away from the image?

Does anyone in the group have similar images or are they very different? Ask the members to find one or two other people with similarities in their image (for example, a hobby or brand). Pick one of these items e.g. football. Why do people in this group like football? For example, it could be because it is exciting, glamorous, it keeps you fit, it is competitive, your friends or family like it.

In small groups make an advertisement about why football is great. Can the same ad show all the reasons why football is great or do you need to create a different ad for each reason?

Can people like the same things but for different reasons or do people place different values on the same item?

Go back to the individual personal images created previously - choose a mixture of the popular labels of identity that make up these images - brands, friends or mobile phones. Explain that although lots of people might have chosen them, people can have a different reason for why they think they are important. This tends to be because of the values they see in them e.g. what values might be behind having a mobile phone – friendship (phones help us keep in touch with our friends), safety (phones mean you can contact your parents if you need to), fitting in (everyone else has one).

Can the group think of some values behind other popular items such as brands- fitting in, wanting to belong, loyalty to a football team and interest in fashion. Discuss some of the values that might be behind some of the items people had in common.

- Do people have different values behind the items they chose?
- Does the group have less in common with each other now or does it matter that individuals may have different values?
- Could we be friends with someone who had different values?

Conclusion: Finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. What surprised them in the session? What did they have in common? What differences did they have? Introduce the next session which explores how relationships influence our identity.

Session 5 – Groups

Time: approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes.

Aim:

- To look at the relationships that influence our identity
- To explore how we manage these relationships

Activity 1: The Tower (30 - 45 minutes)

This is a fun exercise that develops teambuilding, team co-operation, communication skills. It is also an exploration of roles within groups and people's approaches to completing tasks.

Materials required: Newspapers, tape, paperclips, stapler, a raw egg (optional).

How to proceed – you can split the group into smaller groups or leave them as one group depending on the numbers. Each group is given a supply of newspapers, 1 roll of tape, 1 box of paperclips and 1 stapler. The instructions are that the group must try and build a free standing tower of newspaper. It cannot be attached to the floor, furniture, wall, person or other structure. The tower must be at least 5 feet tall and be able to withstand a moderate breeze or capable of supporting a raw egg without dropping and breaking it.

Each team has 15 minutes to erect the tower. The first 6 minutes must be used for planning how to build the tower, without touching any of the materials. The materials given at the beginning will be the only materials supplied. After 6 minutes the group have 9 minutes to build the tower. When the time is called the group must stop and the tower is judged to see if it meets the criteria. If you have more than one tower they can be compared to see which one best meets the criteria.

On completing lead the group in a discussion on how they found the activity.

- Was it difficult to spend time planning or would people have preferred to just get stuck in?
- How did the team communicate with each other?
- What roles did people take on in the group?
- What role did you take on?
- How did you find having to work together to finish such a hard task?
- What issues came up?
- What advice would you give someone who wanted to be part of the group?
- What does the group value?
- Are the group's values different to your own values?

Activity 2: Belonging to Groups (40 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of having to explore participants' involvement in groups and the identity of various types of groups.

Materials required: art and craft materials.

How to proceed – Break the participants into several groups. Have each group make an advertisement for their group to encourage others to join them. In order to do this encourage them explore;

- What are the selling points of this group?
- What would be the benefits to others in joining this group?
- What skills or interests would you need to have to be part of the group?
- Is there anything you would change in the group?

When the groups have finished their individual posters ask them to present them to the whole group and think back on why they decided on this poster and answer the following questions.

- Do they think of themselves as a distinct group? Why?
- In what ways might their group be different from other groups?
- Are these differences important? Why?

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Highlight some of the key points that arose during the first and second activities. Very briefly introduce the following session.

Session 6 – Exploring Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Time: approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes.

Aims:

- To explore how conflict can arise in a group
- To discuss people's views of conflict
- To look at ways of managing conflict

Activity 1: The Chair Game (30 minutes)

This activity gives participants the opportunity to experience a real conflict and explore creative ways of solving it.

Materials required: chairs, agree/disagree signs, A4 paper, flipchart paper, flipchart markers, coloured markers, pens, blue-tack.

How to proceed – begin by forming three groups and then separating them into different areas where they cannot hear each other's discussions and then give the following instructions to each group separately.

- *Group 1: Your goal is to arrange all the chairs in a single line as quickly as you can*
- *Group 2: Your goal is to arrange all the chairs in a circle as quickly as you can*
- *Group 3: Your goal is to arrange all the chairs outside the room as quickly as you can*

Set the groups to work and observe their reactions as they realise their very different goals. Allow the conflict to arise – but ensure safety. Generally speaking, the groups will begin to fight over the chairs - this is what is meant to happen initially. If energy is lagging or any of the groups have given up, remind them that they have a task to complete and give them another couple of chances to come up with a solution. This usually happens after a maximum of three chances. Keep the energy up by really encouraging them to complete the task.

Note: The facilitator needs to allow a certain level of conflict to take place and should only stop the activity if there are health and safety issues. The solution is the groups don't have to be in conflict but they can cooperate to get all of their tasks done. By communicating with each other rather than fighting over the chairs they can complete each task one at a time and then all of the groups have completed what they were asked to do.

When the exercise has run for a sufficient period of time, lead a group discussion based on the following questions;

- How did you feel taking part in that activity?
- What was your first reaction when you saw what was happening?
- Was it difficult or easy to come up with a solution?
- What skills did you use to find the solution?

- What can we learn from this activity?
- Do you think this activity reflects how we generally respond to conflict in our own lives?

Finish the activity by brainstorming with the group the different types of conflict they have experienced and what other conflicts exist in our own society and in other societies. Discuss the answers.

Activity 2: A Moving Debate – Conflict is... (30 minutes)

This activity gives participants the opportunity to explore their understanding of conflict and to express different opinions in a safe environment, thereby demonstrating positive conflict.

Materials required: prepared statements on conflict and a 'Magic Microphone' as specified below.

How to proceed – to begin everyone is asked to stand in the middle of the floor. A statement is read out and if the participants agree with that statement they are asked to move to one side of the room. If they disagree with the statement they are asked to move to the other side of the room. If they are undecided they stay in middle.

The 'Magic Microphone' is introduced at the start – this can be a ball or a marker and the participants can only speak during the debate if they have the magic microphone in their hand. The facilitator moves around the room to try to get as wide a range of opinions as possible. It may be best to start off on the side that has least support or it can be useful to vary the side you start off with, depending on the group. It is important to try and encourage participants as much as possible to participate and remind them that their honest opinions are very welcome.

All of the statements made begin with 'Conflict is...' and are designed to encourage participants to begin thinking about the nature of conflict. Some possible statements include:

- Conflict is easier with people you are close to than with strangers
- Conflict is best avoided for our own good
- Conflict is always caused by the other person
- Conflict is always violent
- Conflict is the best way to bring about change in this world
- Conflict is positive

When the exercise has run for a sufficient period of time, lead a group discussion based on the following questions;

- Was it easy to speak up and share your opinion during this activity?
- How did you feel when people didn't agree with you?
- What can we learn from this activity?
- In our own lives is it possible to start looking at conflict as something positive?

After the debate, divide participants into small groups and ask them to write out a definition of conflict on large flipchart paper based on the discussions they have just heard. When they have finished, stick the definitions on the wall as a reminder for the

next activity and invite all the participants to read each definition. If there is any further discussion or if any questions arise, invite the small groups to explain their definitions further where appropriate.

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Very briefly introduce the following session which focuses on exploring conflict further.

Session 7 – Conflict and Change

Time: approximately 2 hours, 30 minutes.

Aim:

- To discuss the nature of conflict
- To explore the importance of communication in conflict resolution

Materials required: flipchart paper and markers, coloured markers, pens, index cards or post-it notes, diagrams for the Square Circle Triangle activity below and A4 paper.

Activity 1: The Conflict Tree (45 minutes)

This activity uses the image of a tree as a graphic tool to sort conflict issues with the purpose of stimulating discussion about cause and effect in a conflict. It helps groups agree on core problems and assists a group in making decisions about priorities for addressing issues.

How to proceed – This tool is best used within groups – i.e. collectively rather than as an individual exercise. In many conflicts there will be a range of opinions concerning questions such as: What is the core problem? What are the root causes? What are the effects arising from this problem? What is the most important issue for our group to address?

The Conflict Tree offers a method for a group to identify the issues they see as important and then sort these into three categories: (1) core problems, (2) causes, and (3) effects.

On a large sheet of paper, a chalkboard, a flipchart, on the side of a building or on the ground - draw a picture of a tree, including its roots, trunk and branches. At the centre of the trunk of the tree write a statement explaining a conflict which the tree is symbolises. This should reflect a conflict that is relevant and of interest to your group e.g. bullying and harassment of new communities in the local area or a rivalry between two local schools or sports teams. Give each person several index cards or similar paper on which to write a word or two, or draw a symbol or picture, indicating a key issue in the conflict as they see it. This can also be done in small groups depending on numbers rather than individually.

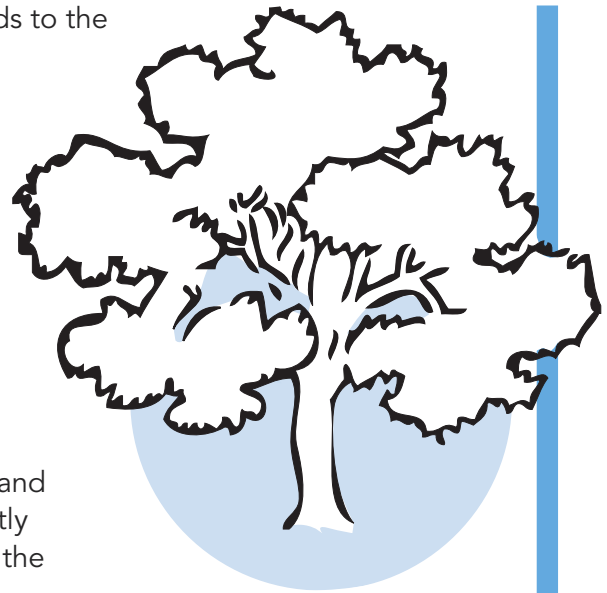
Invite people or the small groups to attach their cards to the tree;

On the trunk, if they think it is a core problem.

On the roots, if they think it is a root cause.

On the branches, if they see it as an effect.

After all the cards have been placed on the tree, the facilitator begins the discussion and tries to get the whole group to agree about the placing of issues, particularly the core issues or problems. An optional next step is to ask people to visualise their group as a living organism (e.g. a bird, a worm, ivy) and place this on the tree in relation to the issues currently being addressed. Is current work focused mainly on the consequences, the roots or the core problem?



Participants may want to think about how they can begin to address some of the issues they have identified. This process may take a long time and need to be continued in further group meetings.

Activity 2: Conflict Toolkit (30 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to encourage the participants in the group to begin to think of positive ways of working with conflict and to develop a range of approaches that could be used in different situations.

Materials required: the map of the area created by the group in **Session 1, Activity 4**, flip chart and markers.

How to proceed – at the beginning of this activity, refer to the previous activity and reflect on some of the learning, in particular the way in which positive communication can contribute to easing a difficult conflict situation. Write the following questions on the flip chart:

- What are some of the attitudes / behaviours / actions that make disagreements worse?
- What are some of the attitudes / behaviours / actions that make disagreements better?
- How can we try to begin to focus on the positive attitudes / behaviours / actions rather than focusing on the negative?

Divide the participants into small groups and ask them to draw on their own experiences in answering the questions on the flipchart. When they have finished discussing this ask them to feedback their answers to the large group. It may be useful to write their answers on the flipchart so that they can be easily referred to later.

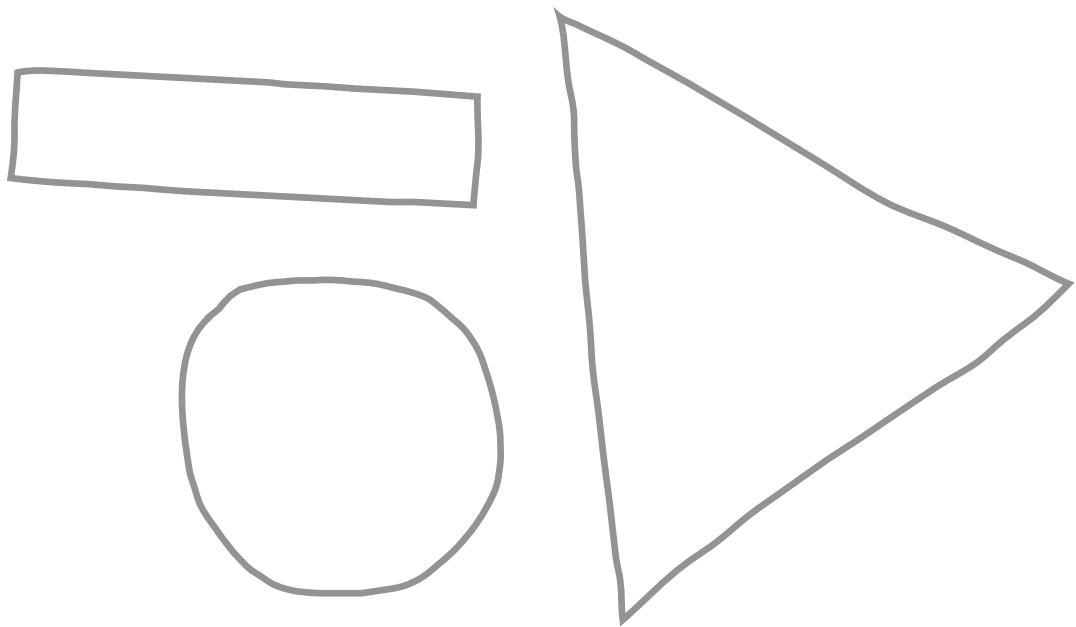
When all of the groups have shared their answers ask the participants to take another look at the community maps they created in **Session 1, Activity 4**. Ask them to identify the areas of negative conflict on the maps and in particular, one conflict that they feel

they may be able to take action on - maybe by focusing on increasing their own positive attitudes / behaviours / actions, reducing their negative ones, engaging with other members of the community or another course of action that they decide on. If action plans begin to emerge, it is important to focus on the support the young people would need in order to begin any processes of change within their communities.

Activity 3: Listening Skills – Squares, Circles, Triangles (45 minutes)

This is a useful exercise when starting a dialogue to ensure that all participants understand the importance of communication and how poor communication can contribute to conflict.

Materials required: pens, A4 paper, chairs and prepared diagram as below.



How to proceed – participants are divided into pairs and asked to identify themselves as person “A” and person “B”. They are then asked to take two chairs and sit back to back to each other. Person “A” is given an A4 sheet with a diagram of a rectangle, circle and triangle drawn in random positions and of random sizes – a sample diagram is provided above, but all participants should receive different diagrams.

Person “B” is given a blank sheet of A4 paper and a pencil or pen. Person “A” must explain to person “B” how to identically reproduce the picture exactly onto his\her blank sheet. Person “B” is not allowed to ask any questions or to talk and is not allowed to peep over the shoulder of the other person. After they have completed the task they are asked to show their work to the rest of the group. The exercise is then repeated and this time Person “A” and person “B” reverse roles with “A” drawing and “B” giving directions.

To bring the learning together at the end of the exercise the facilitator uses a few of the completed diagrams to highlight some of the common mistakes and to highlight some of the very good re-creations of the diagram. The facilitator makes some general points to take a broader look at communication and encourage deeper discussion within the group. The facilitator can also ask some general questions such as “Was it easier to send or receive the message?” These points might include:

- How we assume we know what the other person is telling us (demonstrated by some drawings done landscape rather than portrait for example)
- The need for creativity in communication - some people may not be familiar with the concept “diameter of a circle” therefore we can use a plate, cup or other item to communicate how best to draw the correct size of circle
- The importance of eye contact
- The importance of asking questions to gain greater clarity
- Sometimes we do not wish to hear what is being said

The facilitator(s) then divides the group into smaller groups and they are asked to work together to make a list of what can be learned about communication from this simple exercise. Each small group feeds back their findings to the large group and participants are encouraged to ask questions and make comments around the presentations.

Activity 4: Module 1 review and evaluation (15 minutes)

Materials required: flip chart and markers.

How to proceed – List the topics covered in **Sessions 1 to 7** of this module. Ask the participants to identify:

- Things they enjoyed.
- Things they did not enjoy so much.
- What they learned about themselves.
- What they learned about others.
- Do they feel they might change some of their attitudes or behaviours?
- Which ones and why?
- Is there any additional support they might want on issues discussed?

Conclusion: finish by briefly outlining that module two is available and the topics it covers, should the participants wish to continue with the programme. Take the opportunity to thank the participants and congratulate them for the work on and involvement in this module. Remind them that they can always seek your advice and support around issues that may arise in the future.

Module 2 - In and Out

On Discrimination and Exclusion

Introduction

This module focuses on the related issues of discrimination and exclusion and consists of 5 sessions each with its own set of aims. The module seeks to bring young people on a journey beginning with their own experiences and knowledge of the topic and then supporting them in exploring who benefits from discrimination and exclusion.

Aims

In this module, the group will explore the nature and impact of discrimination and exclusion, the groups that particularly experience these issues and the impact it has on them. It will encourage the group to explore who benefits from discrimination and exclusion, who has the power to change this situation and how it may be changed.

- The group will become aware of their own knowledge and experience of discrimination and exclusion
- The group will explore and discuss how discrimination and exclusion are defined
- The group will explore the various forms that discrimination and exclusion take
- The group will begin to understand the impact that discrimination and exclusion has on them
- The group will explore who benefits from discrimination and exclusion and how these are perpetuated
- The group will identify other groups that have challenged discrimination and exclusion
- The group will discuss who has the power to challenge discrimination and exclusion
- The group will explore what power, if any, they have to challenge discrimination and exclusion

Session 1 – Introducing ‘In and Out’

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aims:

- To highlight what individuals in a group share in common
- To illustrate how our daily lives can be very similar or quite different

Activity 1: Anyone Who...? (20 minutes)

This game gets the group running around while also gently introducing the many ways in which we can be different or similar to each other.

Materials required: chairs for every member of the group but one.

How to proceed - Have the group sit in a circle with one person standing in the middle. The person in the middle must call out a statement - ‘any one who...’ and think of something that group members might have in common, for example ‘anyone who is wearing jeans’. Any group member for whom that statement is true must get up and swap seats. The person in the middle must try and sit on an empty chair while the others are swapping seats. The person left standing down is now in the middle and the game starts again.

As the group begins to feel more confident and comfortable together they may feel safe to begin to ask questions that are sensitive to them.

Activity 2: A Moving Debate. Hopes, Fears and Expectations (15 minutes)

This activity is an active way to remind a group to think about what its group’s contract might look like and why such contracts are important.

Materials required: prepared statements on behaviour in a group (examples below).

How to proceed – prepare seven or eight statements which you feel might reflect people’s attitudes to taking part in a group – some sample statements are listed below:

- When in a group it is important to listen to other people and not to talk ‘over’ them
- When working in a group, I don’t like being ‘slagged’ or bullied
- When in a group, it’s important we have time for a regular break
- When in a group, I like to give everything a go, even if I feel shy
- In a group, it’s important that everyone has a chance to be heard

The debate begins by labelling one side of the room ‘agree’ and the opposite side ‘disagree’. When a statement is read out, each participant moves to a side of the room depending on whether or not they agree with that statement. They can then discuss their choice with a partner or with the whole group.

Based on this discussion and debate, the group can then agree a set of common ground rules which reflect the choices and wishes of the group members. This 'contract' can be used in later sessions to assess whether the group is abiding by its 'rules'.

Activity 3: Agreeing Appropriate Language (45 minutes)

This activity builds further on Activity 3 in Module 1, Session 1 (see page 14 - if this activity has not been completed by your group, it might be useful to undertake it first)

Materials required: a copy of the agreement made in Activity 3, Session 1, Module 1

How to proceed – Ask the group to review their earlier contract and to add or subtract from it as appropriate; do they think it is still a good contract or does it need changing? Why?

- In smaller groups of 3 or 4, ask them to think about particular groups in society and what words or labels are often used to describe them – give examples, young people, people with a disability, gay people, Travellers, foreigners etc. Ask each group to feedback some of the words or phrases used and, in the whole group, discuss why we 'label' groups and how such groups might feel about that labelling?
- Explore with the group whether or not such labels are 'fair' or 'unfair' and why? Make a list of the answers on a flipchart and discuss them. Encourage the group to be honest in their answers and, if necessary, add in some of the labels you know are frequently used.
- Then ask to group to discuss whether there should be any restrictions on the language we use to describe others and why?
- Finally, ask them to think about whether words and labels can lead to actions and whether such actions should be allowed or not?

Activity 4: What's My Role? (30 minutes)

This activity is a playful exploration of how individuals might be treated according to their perceived status in society.

Materials required: a new deck of cards, flipchart and markers, blue tack and sticky labels.

How to proceed – shuffle the deck and then invite each member of the group to pick a card and without looking at the card stick it to their forehead, with the card facing out for the rest of the group to see. Ask the group to begin to walk around and explain that their card is a symbol of their status in this game. Low cards attract a low status, high cards equal high status.

As they walk around the group members react to each other according to their status. For example a person with the status of the King should be greeted by the other members of the group as an extremely important, respected and powerful person.

Allow the game to run long enough for people to gain an insight into what status they have been assigned. Ask the members of the group to sit down and without looking at their card guess what card they have been given (on the basis of how people reacted to them). When everyone has had a guess they can look at the cards and see if they were

right. Then organise a group discussion on what possible status might be attributed to different roles in society. Some discussion questions might include:

- Who might have similar roles in your community?
- How are people with these various roles treated?
- How might people feel if they are treated in this way?
- Who might want to challenge or change this situation?
- Do you think it should or could change? Why?

Note: record the responses to these questions and display them prominently in the room to prompt further discussion later.

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Very briefly introduce the following session which focuses on exploring conflict further.

Session 2 – Exploring Discrimination and Exclusion

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aims:

- To get to know each other and have fun
- To introduce the concepts of discrimination and exclusion
- To discuss experiences of being discriminated against and/or being excluded from an activity or group

Activity 1: Master and Servants (15 minutes)

This game will encourage the group to focus on non-verbal communication and is a playful look at power.

Materials required: chairs (optional) for half the members of the group.

How to proceed – you will need an uneven number of participants for this activity - you can create this by opting in or out of the game yourself. Everyone pair off except for one member of the group and agree in pairs who will be the master and who will be the servant.

The servants should take a seat and form a circle while masters should stand behind their servants. The individual without a partner should stand behind an empty chair.

The game begins when the person with the empty chair gestures (e.g. winks or nods) to one of the servants to come to their chair. That servant must then try to escape their master to the empty chair without being caught. The master has to try and catch the servant before they escape by tipping them while still standing behind the chair. If the servant escapes the new master without a servant, the master must try to attract a 'new'

servant to his or her empty chair. Remember, masters can get overly controlling, you have been warned!

The game finishes when people are energised or it comes to a natural ending.

Activity 2: What is discrimination? (40 minutes)

This activity is based on the results of a study undertaken in 2006 by the Equality Authority and the National Youth Council of Ireland on how young people felt adults treated them - most felt that adults did not treat them equally and that most adults 'stereotyped' young people.

How to proceed – begin with a general discussion based around the definitions of discrimination and prejudice as found on **pages 8 and 9**. Make a copy for each person or display the definition prominently for all to see. Use the statement and the questions below to stimulate the discussion.

Statement:

Discrimination is prejudice in action. Groups labelled as different are discriminated against. They may be isolated, made criminals by laws (that, for example make their way of life illegal), left to live in unhealthy conditions, deprived of any political voice, given the worst jobs or no jobs at all, denied entry to public events or places, subjected to random police checks etc.

Some questions:

- Can you think of people in your community who are discriminated against?
- Can you think of other examples of discrimination in Ireland or internationally?
- Are young people ever discriminated against?
- Are all young people treated in this way or does it depend on what clothes they wear or music they listen to?
- Does everyone see young people this way?
- Who are most likely to discriminate against young people?
- What is the benefit of discriminating against someone or in favour of someone else?
- Are there ever circumstances where discrimination in favour of one group or another can be justified (if they cannot think of such a circumstance, tell them about positive discrimination in terms of women's rights – for example in Parliaments around the world).

Following this discussion, ask the group to draw up definitions for Prejudice and Discrimination in their own words?

Activity 3: Going Shopping (45 minutes)

This activity is a practical way for the participants to explore young people's experience of stereotyping.

Materials required: pens, A4 paper, art & craft materials and 'Conor's' story.

How to proceed – in the study referred to above, going shopping was often seen as a difficulty faced by young people due to stereotyping. The common perception was that staff and security guards in particular, but also other personnel automatically regarded a group of young people as suspect. In the study, one person, Conor, told his story.

Ask everyone to read Conor's story or read it out if necessary and then discuss the following questions or others that arise:

- What are the key points in the story?
- Who is being discriminated against in this story?
- Who is benefiting from this?
- Do you think this situation could ever be improved? How?

Then ask the group to explore the following questions and to do the following activities around the story:

- Thinking about the story, could you make a photograph or a role play of what the group considers are the key moments where the outcome could have changed?
- Thinking about the story is there anything you would change at this point to change the outcome?
- Ask the people in the photograph/role play to carry out this change (at this point they can make a video clip with movement and conversation too).
- Try several changes to see what outcomes emerged.
- Were any outcomes better or worse than others?

Lead a further group discussion to explore the issue further based on the following questions:

- What other stereotypes are there of young people?
- Are there stereotypes that are specific to young people from your area?
- Can you think of any impact that these stereotypes might have on young people from your area?
- How could you change these stereotypes?
- Who has the power to change them?

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Highlight some of the key points participants have learned about discrimination and how it affects people. Very briefly introduce the following session which focuses on labels and stereotyping.

Conor's Story

Me and my sister were shopping in (name of shop) and we went in and there were like four of us, me, him (his friend sitting beside him), and then my sister and her friend and the minute we went in I swear to God we were watched like hawks. I think she was the head security that was watching us, and then she had, like, all the minions running after us. We were actually genuinely shopping. We had a trolley, and we were going around collecting stuff, we were hardly going to fill a trolley with stuff and then walk out without paying, you know what I mean? I actually approached her and said 'Listen will you stop following us' and she basically said 'It's my job and I'm allowed to follow you...if you're not happy then don't shop here.' Like the trolley was full of stuff, a lot of money on the trolley...I just left, I just walked off.

Inequality and the Stereotyping of Young People (Devlin 2006, page 30)

Session 3 – Categories, Labels and Stereotypes

Time: approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes.

Aims:

- To continue to develop the themes from the last session
- To explore why we use stereotypes
- To examine negative and positive stereotypes
- To explore further some the consequences of stereotyping

Activity 1: The Memory Game (10 minutes)

This game is fun and explores how our brain categorises objects in order to help us remember.

Materials required: a selection of pairs e.g. 2 pens, 2 spoons, 2 bean bags; a watch; a large cloth such as a towel.

How to proceed – the group can play this game either as a whole or as individuals; place the paired items randomly on a table or tray. Cover with a cloth. Once you remove the cloth allow 30 seconds (adjust the time appropriately for your group) to memorise as many pairs as possible. (If you want you can start with a longer time and then reduce down as the group get more practice.) The object of the game is to see how many pairs the group/individual can remember?

Activity 2: Categorising – group discussion (15 minutes)

One of the ways we organise our world is by sorting items into categories such as kitchen utensils, football gear, office equipment, music. In fact sorting things into categories helps us remember things for the future and also helps our brain take in a lot of information quickly. We are so used to categorising everything that not only do we give them a label but we also attach a feeling to it. For example:

Good or enjoyable? Holidays, discos, ice-cream etc.

Bad or not enjoyable? Mondays, going to the dentist, celery juice etc.

How to proceed – Ask the group to think of other examples. Then explore with them how categories give us a really handy code when we are talking to each other. For example you can say to your friend: *'I went on holidays, went to loads of discos and ate loads of ice-cream'* – straight away, she will know that you had a good time. OR *'I went to work on Monday, went to the dentist on the way home and had a glass of celery juice'* – many might feel sorry for her.

By associating feelings with different words or labels it gives us a short hand for talking to each other and it makes it easy to talk to others who share similar interests and values. If you're the sort of person who likes holidays, discos and ice-cream you're likely to know lots of other people who also like these things. However, sometimes when our brains use these short cuts we can make judgements too quickly without all the facts.

Activity 3: Bursting Bubbles (1 hour)

This activity explores the issue of stereotypes in an immediate, relevant and fun way while making serious points along the way.

Aims:

- Explore and understand the meaning of the word stereotype
- Work in groups to come up with stereotype statements
- Discuss whether the statements are fair or unfair
- To write down what was learned from the activity

Materials Needed:

A collection of multi-colored, blown up balloons, strips of paper upon which to write statements, pens and markers.

How to proceed – Begin the lesson by writing the keywords *man* and *woman* side-by-side at the top of a poster or flipchart and draw a line between the two words to create two-columns and in small groups of 3 or 4, get participants to set up a poster paper sheet in the same way.

Then ask each group to write words or phrases that commonly describe the qualities or characteristics of a man under the word *man* and words or phrases that commonly describe a woman under the word *woman*. Examples might include:

Man - *active, smart, hard working, head of household, breadwinner, strong...*

Woman - *loving, shopping, likes flowers, cries easily, carer...*

Next, ask each group to share their lists with the larger group and then give each group two additional minutes to brainstorm other words or phrases following the feedback. In the full group, discuss some of the following questions:

Are you happy with the lists you have created? Do you see any changes you would like to make to them?

Are there terms that do not belong under the heading they're under? Are there terms that might fit under both headings?

Is it fair to say that all men _____ or that all women _____?

Now, discuss the meaning of the term stereotype

Ask participants to describe and discuss the meaning of the word – dictionaries regularly describe the term as follows - an overly simplified picture or opinion of a person, group, or thing, for example it is a stereotype to say that all young people are rude or bad mannered.

Write on the flipchart the following sentences:

- *Men are better drivers than women*
- *Men are better at woodwork and maths than women are*
- *Black sportspeople are better than white sportspeople*
- *All those without jobs are lazy etc.*

Ask members of the group to discuss these statements and to consider the following questions:

- *Are the statements too general to be useful or true?*
- *Are such statements fair or unfair?*
- *Do statements such as these have consequences or do they lead to actions that might be negative?*

Ask the group to brainstorm additional stereotypes they might have heard or thought about, add these to the list. Make a final list and ask the group to write out each stereotype on one of the strips of paper and display these in the room for later discussion.

Other stereotypes might include:

- All young people who are into computers are geeks
- Young people are noisy
- Men don't cook or do fashion
- Poor people are lazy
- Women are better cooks than men
- Girls are not as sporty as boys
- All politicians are crooks
- Everyone believes in God
- All businesspeople are rich
- All foreigners are scroungers
- All Travellers are cheats etc.

Now it's time to use the balloons!

Ask participants to read each sentence strip out loud and stick it on a wall or flipchart and then discuss each statement with a view to refuting or rejecting the stereotype if it is unfair. When you are satisfied that the stereotype has been adequately discussed and debated, invite one person to burst a balloon using a pin – *burst the stereotype!*

Review the activity - *what did they learn? Were there times when they felt angry or annoyed during the discussion? How does the activity relate to 'real life'?*

Session 4 – Exploring Power

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aim: To explore –

- The nature of power
- Its uses
- Its abuses

Activity 1: Conscious Alley (1 hour)

This activity is a creative way to explore the influences that come to play on the decisions individuals make in day to day situations.

Materials required: prepared hypothetical dilemma as outlined below.

How to proceed – this activity can be used to explore any issue but the key to its success is preparation with the group. The objective of the activity is to have one individual with a decision to make or a dilemma to resolve. The facilitator should prepare a hypothetical dilemma for the group beforehand - it should be a scenario that the group can empathise with and have an opinion on and one that hopefully will cause debate. Example: You're sitting upstairs on a bus. The bus is nearly full and you're looking forward to getting home. A girl is sitting a few seats in front of you. She is wearing a uniform from a fast food restaurant. Two men who seem to be drunk come upstairs, one sits in the same seat as her and the other sits in front of her. The men start to slag her and 'have a laugh'. The girl doesn't get up to move but seems upset. Should you intervene to help her? What should you do?

Introduce the scenario to the group who are then asked to discuss it – what would they do? What should they do? What are the consequences of different actions?

Invite them to role-play the situation, adding in more detail if they wish. Is the girl Irish? Are you Irish? Are the men Irish? Might these additions to the story change it? Do you think these changes might affect your decision to intervene or not and why?

Once the group have discussed the scenario in some detail ask for a volunteer to be the person with the decision to make. With the group discuss and agree two courses of action. In the example above it might be to do nothing or to confront the men. Ask the group to split in half and form two lines facing each other, creating an alley that the volunteer will have to walk through. One side of the alley is arguing for one course of action, while the other side will argue for the other. As the volunteer walks down through the alley they must listen to both sides of the debate. On reaching the end of the alley they must declare what action they would choose to take.

Activity 2: Big Power, Small Power (45 minutes)

This activity is a group discussion that explores power and how it is used in our community and society.

Materials required: flipchart or poster paper plus markers.

How to proceed – ask participants to work in small groups of 3 or 4 and to discuss the questions below and then ask them to record the main points on the paper provided. Ask them to give one example to back up their answers in each case.

- *Who has power within our local community?*
- *Who has power in wider society?*
- *How do we know who is powerful?*
- *What is power?*
- *How do powerful people get power?*
- *How do they use their power?*
- *What do they use power for?*

Each group can then report to the larger group – similarities and differences between the groups can be noted and discussed. If the group is responding well, the discussion can be moved outwards to discuss their views of these questions in the world at large.

Again in their small groups, ask them to think about;

- *What power young people have in their community and how do they think it is used?*
- *Do they think young people ever use their power to promote or perpetuate stereotypes (and the discrimination that might follow)?*
- *Do young people ever challenge stereotyping?*
- *What examples do they have of this?*

Ask the group to come back into the bigger group and share their discussions. Overall, do people in the group think that young people generally would want to change anything? Why? What power do young people have to make a difference?

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Encourage them to think about one thing they would change if they had the power. Very briefly introduce the following session which explores ways of challenging stereotypes.

Session 5 – What would you change?

Time: approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Aim:

- To get the group to look at their potential power to challenge discrimination and inequality
- To reflect on what insights have been gained from the previous sessions
- To explore options for dealing with stereotypes and discrimination faced in their own lives
- To reflect on their own prejudices and how this may affect others
- To explore what might society look like without discrimination and whether such a society is possible?
- To explore whether there is anything the group can do to change the situation?

Activity 1: Group discussion (20 minutes)

This is a group discussion exploring the participant's experiences of being discriminated against.

Materials required: none.

How to proceed – based on the work the group has done in the last few sessions, ask individuals within the group to think of any ways in which they might have been discriminated against? Is it ongoing or was it just a once off? Then ask them to consider the following questions:

- *What do you think was the reason you were/are treated this way?*
- *What power did the other person have that enabled them to treat you like this?*
- *What might be different if you hadn't been discriminated against?*
- *Do you ever discriminate against other people?*
- *How do you do that?*
- *Why do you do that?*

Activity 2: Group discussion (40 minutes)

This is a group discussion encouraging participants to explore the power they have.

Materials required: none.

How to proceed – Ask each participant to think about their answers to the following questions (read them out to facilitate everyone).

- *What is your nationality?*
- *What colour is your skin?*
- *What level of education do you have?*
- *Are you in good health?*
- *Are you able bodied?*
- *Do you have access to transport, the arts, sport and recreation?*

- *What talents/skills/abilities do you have that at times might give you an advantage over others?*
- *Do you have a good social support group?*

Having answered these questions individually, ask the group to consider the following questions:

- *What privileges do they think they have from being in the position they are?*
- *Are there any disadvantages or problems connected with having this position or having this identity?*
- *Overall how powerful do they see themselves as being? Think in terms of their immediate environment and then in national and global terms*
- *Ask them to choose one of the areas of power in their life and take time to consider in what ways you could use this power more effectively, to transform a relationship, a community or a wider social issue.*

Take the opportunity to split into smaller groups and ask participants to share the responses to these questions in so far as they are comfortable doing this.

Activity 3: Group discussion (30 minutes)

Start by asking the group to share any reactions or insights into the question of power they might have had as a result of the previous sessions. Then discuss the following questions:

- *Do participants feel they have the power to change situations in their life?*
- *Individually and as a group, what would people most like to change?*
- *What would be different if it was changed?*
- *What needs to happen to make that change possible?*
- *Does the group have any power to this change?*
- *What can they do?*

Activity 4: Review and evaluation (15 minutes)

Materials required: flip chart and markers.

How to proceed – list the topics covered in **Sessions 1 to 4** of this module. Ask the participants to identify:

- *Things they enjoyed.*
- *Things they did not enjoy so much.*
- *What they learned about themselves.*
- *What they learned about others.*
- *Do they feel they might change some of their attitudes or behaviours?*
- *Which ones and why?*
- *Is there any additional support they might want on issues discussed?*

Conclusion: briefly outline that module three is available and the topics it covers, should the participants wish to continue further with the programme. Take the opportunity to thank the participants and congratulate them for the work on and involvement in this module. Remind them that they can always seek your advice and support around issues that may arise in the future.

Module 3 - What's it to me?

Exploring the importance of culture

Introduction

This module is designed to explore different aspects of culture and its importance in everyone's daily life and consists of 5 sessions each with its own set of aims. It looks at how culture changes over time and how it is influenced by cultures and traditions from other places and through interaction with other people.

Nationally, regionally and locally, many communities now include people from many lands and from many different cultures. This has meant that ongoing change has become a normal part of daily life for adults and young people alike.

Young people are often at the forefront of these changes as they meet each other on a regular basis through school, work or recreation. However, meeting others on a regular basis does not always mean that people develop an understanding of each other let alone respect for one other or that they have opportunities to explore cultural differences and similarities.

Aims

In this module, participants will be encouraged to think about what makes up a culture, to look at cultures around them and to imagine what a multicultural and an intercultural Ireland is and could be. Specifically the group will:

- Explore the question – *How Irish is your culture?*
- Identify and discuss the hidden aspects of culture
- Examine aspects of the different cultures that make up Ireland today
- Debate the nature of interculturalism
- Explore their own experiences of diversity
- 'Imagine' what a culturally friendly space would look like
- Talk about where they stand on issues such as racism etc.

Session 1 – Mixing it up

Time: approximately 2 hours

Activity 1: Chow mein, curry or coddle? (45 minutes)

This activity is a simple and fun way to explore how Irish culture has already become significantly multicultural and that we are all part of that multiculturalism.

Materials required: none.

How to proceed – ask the group to make a list of things in their daily lives that have become influenced by people and cultures from outside Ireland – if necessary give some examples – *food, clothes, words, music, sport, television, cinema etc.*

In small groups, ask them to list these items in more detail and to list some of the countries and cultures that have come to influence them e.g. explore their likes or dislikes around Chinese or Italian food etc.

Get feedback from each group and build up a whole group list of the ways in which Irish culture has changed and what the sources of these changes have been. Discuss the list developed by the whole group and then discuss some of the following questions:

- *Are they in any way surprised by the scale of the list?*
- *How do they feel about the changes in Irish society, are they all positive changes or are there things that concern them? If there are what are the specific concerns?*
- *What changes are most important to them and why?*

Activity 2: Is Your Culture Irish?

This activity develops further some of the ideas in activity 1 above and extends the debate about how Irish culture is already 'internationalised'.

Aims:

- To explore the internationalisation of Irish culture
- To try to define what the term Irish culture means
- To recognise that culture is constantly changing

Materials needed: flipchart or poster paper plus markers

How to proceed – write the following billboard graffiti on the flipchart or poster:

- *Your Christ is Jewish*
- *Your car is Japanese*
- *Your pizza is Italian*
- *Your democracy is Greek*
- *Your coffee is Brazilian*
- *Your holiday is Turkish*
- *Your numbering is Arabic*
- *Your writing is Latin*
- *Your language is English*

You say you're Irish ...

Having introduced the piece, have participants discuss it in small groups of 3 or 4 and encourage each group to add additional lines to the graffiti e.g. *your clothes are from? Your music is from? Etc.*

Get feedback from each group and add more ideas to the list

Back in their small groups, ask participants to now consider the question 'What does it mean to be Irish? This can be easily done by answering the question *I say I'm Irish because ...*'

Again, take feedback and record the answers on the flipchart and build up a 'profile' of what it means to be Irish, *is there agreement? Are there disagreements?*

Then tell the group that the original graffiti included the following last line: 'So, is your neighbour a foreigner?' Ask each person to think about their area or community, their workplace, school etc. and to identify who they might consider to be 'foreigners' and ask them to answer the question 'What do I mean when I say X is a foreigner?'

Following this discussion, get the group to consider the following questions:

- *Has the conversation influenced or changed your understanding of what it means to be Irish?*
- *Is it possible to be definite and clear about what it means to be Irish?*

Activity 3: The Iceberg – exploring culture (60 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of exploring the less visible or less obvious aspects of a culture.

Materials required: a diagram of an iceberg, flipchart paper plus markers.

Note: If you wanted to make this activity less word-based, you could try asking the group to draw pictures, cut pictures out of magazines or newspapers or else provide them with images.



How to proceed – explain to the group the idea that an iceberg can represent culture in that only 10% of the iceberg can be seen above water, while 90% is unseen. In the same way some things about our cultures are obvious but others lie beneath the surface as we go about our daily lives

Draw a blank picture of an iceberg so all the group can see it and list some of these items - facial expressions, religious beliefs, religious rituals, ideas about time, art and paintings, values, literature, ways of rearing children, ideas about leadership, gestures, dance, ideas about fairness, the nature of friendship, notions of modesty, foods, games, understanding of the natural world, concept of the individual and the community, work, beauty, music, styles of dress, crafts, rules and values about interactions between the opposite sex and/or the same sex (and not just in sexual situations), about education, home, concepts of family, youth, old age, expressions of respect between people etc.

Ask the group to split into smaller groups of 3 and in each group to draw a copy of the iceberg. In the group ask them to think of an example from their own culture of many of the above items e.g. music, make-up, clothes and dress styles, food preferences, greetings etc. Some of the 'invisibles' could include symbols and badges, attitudes, how we deal with older people etc. You may need to encourage the group to participate in the activity.

In the larger group, take feedback from each group:

- *Are there differences on what should be below and what should be above the waterline?*
- *Can people think of examples to back up their choices?*
- *Are there any differences and/or similarities between the cultures represented in the room?*
- *Why might this be the case?*

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Having completed this exercise can the group create their own definition of culture? Very briefly introduce the following session.

Session 2 – Where in the World?

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aims:

- To explore the reasons people might have for coming here or for travelling abroad.
- To learn more about migration from and into Ireland

Activity 1: Mapping Cultures (30 minutes)

This activity is a creative way of exploring migration in Ireland.

Materials required: a map of the world (can be downloaded from various sites – a Peters Projection map shows the true proportions of the countries of the world), sticky pads or sticky arrows plus art and craft materials.

How to proceed – present the following information to the group

In the last Census (carried out in 2006), there were people from over 188 countries now living in Ireland - although most came from 10 countries. Official figures show that in April 2006 there were a total of 420,000 citizens from other countries living here.

The following table shows the countries that people came from and is taken from a Central Statistics Office report of 2008 which can be downloaded or purchased from the Central statistics office or www.cso.ie. The table can be printed off and copied for the group.

This table shows the number of citizens from each of the countries. 82% of the population not from Ireland comes from 10 countries with the highest number of foreign citizens in Ireland coming from the UK.

Using this table;

- Locate on the map each country that has some of its citizens living in Ireland.
- What countries from the above list are represented in this group, this youth project and this community?
- How many people from different countries have you met recently?

Lead a short group discussion by asking the group to identify countries that Irish people migrate to and think about the reasons why they do so? Do they know people personally who have travelled abroad for reasons other than holidays?

Complete list of countries from which there were non-Irish nationals

Number of persons					
1 - 10	11 - 50	51 - 200	201 - 1,000	1,001 - 10,000	Over 10,000
Anguilla	Azerbaijan	Armenia	Afghanistan	Australia	China
Bahamas	Bahrain	Botswana	Albania	Bangladesh	Germany
Belize	Barbados	Burundi	Algeria	Brazil	Latvia
Bermuda	Benin	Chile	Angola	Canada	Lithuania
Bhutan	Bolivia	Colombia	Argentina	Congo	Nigeria
Brunei	Chad	Cuba	Austria	Czech Republic	Poland
Burkina Faso	Dominica	Cyprus	Belarus	Estonia	United Kingdom
Cambodia	Ecuador	Eritrea	Belgium	France	USA
Cape Verde	El Salvador	Ethiopia	Bosnia / Herzegovina	Hungary	
Central African Republic	Gambia	Guinea		India	
Costa Rica	Guatemala	Hong Kong	Bulgaria	Italy	
Dominican Republic	Honduras	Iceland	Cameroon	Malaysia	
East Timor	Kyrgyzstan	Indonesia	Dem Rep Congo	Moldova	
Faroe Islands	Lesotho	Ivory Coast	Croatia	Netherlands	
Fiji	Luxembourg	Jamaica	Denmark	New Zealand	
Gabon	Mauritania	Kazakhstan	Egypt	Pakistan	
Gibraltar	Mozambique	Lebanon	Finland	Philippines	
Grenada	Nicaragua	Liberia	Georgia	Portugal	
Guyana	Oman	FYROM	Ghana	Romania	
Indian Ocean Territories	Paraguay	Malawi	Greece	Russia	
Laos	Qatar	Malta	Iran	Slovakia	
Liechtenstein	Saudi Arabia	Myanmar Burma	Iraq	South Africa	
Macao	Senegal	Niger	Israel	Spain	
Madagascar	Swaziland	Palestine	Japan	Sudan	
Maldives	Tajikistan	Peru	Jordan	Sweden	
Mali	Yemen	Rwanda	Kenya	Ukraine	
Monacoan		Singapore	Kuwait	Zimbabwe	
Montserrat		Slovenia	Libya		
Namibia		South Korea	Mauritius		
Niue		Syria	Mexico		
Panama		Taiwan	Mongolia		
Porto Rica		Tanzania	Morocco		
Reunion		Togo	Nepal		
Samoa		Trinidad and Tobago	North Korea		
Seychelles		Tunisia	Norway		
Solomon Islands		Uganda	Sierra Leone		
St Kitts and Nevis		United Arab Emirates	Somalia		
St Lucia		Uruguay	Sri Lanka		
St Vincent		Uzbekistan	Switzerland		
Surinam		Venezuela	Thailand		
Tonga		Zambia	Turkey		
Turkmenistan			Vietnam		
Vatican City			Serbia		
Western Sahara					
Total persons from these countries					
187	674	4,729	24,532	114,822	263,996

Activity 2: Profiling Cultures (1 hour)

This activity builds on **Session 2, Activity 1** and explores migration in more detail.

Materials required: the map of the world from **Activity 1**, sticky pads or sticky arrows plus art and craft materials. The group will also need access to the internet or to a library to research various countries.

How to proceed – in small groups and using either the knowledge in the group or the research facilities available, have each group create a profile of two countries to which Irish people migrate and two from which migrants come to Ireland. This might include basic facts, a brief history and some cultural information - if possible think of some of the items from last week's Iceberg activity.

Now ask them to list three reasons why people from Ireland might travel to the specific countries they have chosen – it might be for economic reasons (jobs), to explore other cultures, visit family or friends or because they want to live in another country. The exercise is then repeated for countries from which migrants come to Ireland and the reasons why they might come.

Finally, ask them to discuss why some Irish people object to migrants coming to Ireland while also arguing that Irish people should be allowed to travel wherever they wish for employment etc.?

Activity 3: Presentation (30 minutes)

This activity allows the participants to present some of the research to the larger group.

Materials required: flip chart paper, markers, plus art and craft materials.

How to proceed – having completed **Activity 2** get each group to put together a short presentation on one of their countries for the bigger group.

Allow 3-5 minutes for each group's presentation and allow time for questions or comments from other group members.

When all the presentations are completed, ask the group to look at the similarities and the differences between those who leave Ireland and those who come here. What is the same? What is different?

Record the answers on a flipchart and keep it for future use.

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Very briefly introduce the following session which focuses on the idea of interculturalism.

Session 3 – What is interculturalism?

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aim:

- To introduce the concept of interculturalism
- To look at how many cultures we interact with on a regular basis
- To examine the concept of diversity

Activity 1: Defining interculturalism (30 minutes)

This activity encourages the participants to explore what interculturalism means in everyday life and helps prepare for the activities that follow.

Materials required: flip chart and markers.

How to proceed – make the following points at the outset of the session:

- Interculturalism occurs when two (or more) cultures come into contact over an extended period of time and through such regular contact begin to influence each other and develop a context and setting where people feel not just welcomed but ‘at home’
- Many countries experience multiculturalism where cultures live side by side but rarely influence each other in any real way
- Because Ireland has a wide range of economic, social and cultural links with the outside world and because we have a history of emigration we have many influences from other cultures mixed into our own.

With the whole group, brainstorm what they think interculturalism means in everyday life – in what ways and in what settings interculturalism actually happens – think of relationships, events, sport, music, food, language, dress, family life. This will help the group prepare for the following activities.

Introduce and discuss the following definition of interculturalism with the group:

Interculturalism is essentially about interaction, understanding and respect. It is about ensuring that cultural diversity is acknowledged and catered for. It is about inclusion for minority ethnic groups by design and planning, not as a default or add-on. It further acknowledges that people should have the freedom to keep alive, enhance and share their cultural heritage.

(source: National Consultative Committee of Racism and Interculturalism, 2003)

Activity 2: Exploring Diversity (1 hour)

This activity encourages participants to explore their own personal experiences of dealing with people from another cultural background.

Materials required: flipchart paper, markers and paper, art and craft materials.

How to proceed – working individually, ask the group to think of the 3 encounters or situations they had with a person from a different culture - it might have made them happy/sad, angry/positive, frustrated/enthused, confused/confident etc. Examples could include:

- Encounters on a bus, train, in a shop, at a social event, in a restaurant
- Seeing something happen involving others e.g. on the street, in a shop etc.

Ask participants to reflect on the event and to consider the following questions:

- *What happened?*
- *How did you feel about what happened?*
- *What values might have motivated what happened?*
- *Would you change anything in the future as regards such events or incidents?*
- *Do you think the event of incident is typical of such interactions as you have experienced them?*

Ask the group to then join up in two's or three's and invite them to share their stories with each other? Allow about 7-10 minutes for each person to tell their story and take questions.

In the bigger group have participants share examples of other positive negative experiences that they have had. Are there any similarities across the stories? From these stories, ask them to think of the visible and the invisible values and assumptions that are present in these events. Refer back to **Session 1, Activity 2, The Iceberg**, if this helps.

What can communities, the government and/or individuals do to make sure the interactions between groups are respectful and appropriate?

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Make any additional arrangements that are required to ensure the continued preparation/planning of the cultural event. Very briefly introduce the following session which looks at making their project or school a more welcoming space for people from other cultures.

Session 4 – Imagining Culturally Friendly Places

Time: approximately 2 hours.

Aim:

- To look at the existing group/youth organisation and how they could make it a more welcoming space for people from all cultures

Note: This activity may need to be carried out over an extended period of time. Read through this session and discuss it with the team, your project leader and other relevant people beforehand. You will need to prepare this activity carefully. The questions here are only examples, you may have some to suggest to the group or the group may create their own questions. Also some questions will be relevant to them, some for the staff and some for the management of the project.

Activity 1: Project or School Survey (2 hours)

Materials: flip chart papers, markers, arts and crafts materials, work from the last 5 sessions.

How to proceed – this exercise will require the group to meet with the project leader, manager and youth workers or the class teacher, teachers and principal as appropriate. The group can agree their own questions or use the suggested ones below.

Ask the group to carry out a survey of the youth project in which they are involved, they should assess whether or not they consider it a space where people from all cultures would feel welcome. They can interview each other, other young people, the project staff and others in arriving at this assessment.

Some questions for discussion:

- *How many people from different cultural backgrounds are already involved in the project?*
- *Has the project ever had anyone from a different background come and speak to them about what is important for young people and their parents from another culture?*
- *Do young people from different backgrounds feel that the project respects their culture?*
- *If it is mostly Irish young people in the project how would they feel about opening the project up more to young people from other backgrounds?*
- *What would they not like to see change?*
- *What would they be willing to be flexible on to make sure that people felt welcome?*
- *Would they like to do a programme or any training before the project became more culturally mixed?*
- *What would be their main concerns about inviting young people from different backgrounds to join the group?*

- *What could their youth workers do to make these changes easier?*
- *How could they help to encourage more young people from different cultural backgrounds to attend?*

From the project management they could find out if there is an equality statement? What barriers exist to making the project more culturally mixed? Has the project tried it before? What issues do the management and the project workers think would be raised by having the project more culturally mixed? How could they deal with these problems?

When the group have carried out their survey ask them to draw up a report for the project leader. The report should include their background work and make a number of key recommendations for the project management, the youth workers and the young people as to how to make the space more culturally friendly.

They should also discuss, plan and agree upon at least one action that they can take to ensure more positive cultural interactions in their group/project or community.

Finalise the activity by creating an opportunity for the participants to formally present the plan to the project leader and if possible to celebrate their work with their family and friends, and discuss their report with other young people in the project. Perhaps this could be done at the cultural event?

Conclusion: finish by briefly reviewing the work done in the session, allowing time for feedback and exploring what participants found challenging. Make any additional arrangements that are required to ensure the continued preparation/planning of the cultural event which is the following session.

Session 5 – Where do I stand?

Activity 1: Where Do I Stand?

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Aims:

- To explore views and opinions on racism and other forms of intolerance
- To raise individual's self-awareness of the role they play in society
- To get participants to share their thoughts and ideas
- To draw out and discuss differences in thinking and approach in the group
- To encourage everyone to express their opinion
- To raise awareness of how quickly we sometimes arrive at a decision and then how strongly we tend to defend it and how difficult it can then be to accept other points of view

Materials required:

Flip chart and markers or alternatively an overhead projector, a list of statements and before starting the activity write down the statements on flip chart or an overhead transparency.

How to proceed – tell participants that they should imagine that on one side of the room there is an agree sign and that on the opposite there is a disagree sign.

Explain that you are going to read out statements and then those who disagree with the statement should move to the side of the room with the disagree sign. Those who agree should move to the side with the agree sign. Those who have no opinion or who are undecided should stay in the middle, but they will not be able to speak.

Read out the first statement.

Once everybody is standing in their chosen position ask those by the walls, in turn, to explain to the others why they chose that position. They should try to convince the rest of the group that they are right and therefore, that the others should join them. Allow about 10 minutes for this.

When everyone has spoken invite anyone who wishes to change their position to do so.

Now read a second statement and repeat the process until all the statements have been debated.

Finally, evaluate the exercise using the questions below and/or additional ones triggered by the discussion.

Evaluation and debriefing

Start by asking the following questions:

- *How did you feel during the exercise?*
- *Was it difficult to choose? Why?*
- *Was it difficult to stay in the middle and not be able to speak?*
- *What sorts of arguments were used, those based on fact or those which appealed to the emotions?*
- *Which were more effective?*
- *Are there any comparisons between what people did and said during this exercise and reality?*
- *Are the statements valid?*
- *Was the exercise useful?*

Tips for the facilitator

In order to facilitate participation you may invite members who are particularly silent to voice their opinion. In the same way ask someone who intervenes too often to hold off for a while.

The statements are designed to be controversial and to stimulate debate – it is important to explain this at the end of the evaluation.

Depending on the group you can develop the discussion on several points:

- Despite their ambiguity, there is also a certain truth in the statements. Explain the fact that in all communication different people understand different things in the same statement. It is also normal that people think differently and differ about what they think. There is not necessarily a right or wrong attitude or

position. What is more important is to know and understand the reasons that motivated different positions.

- Try to draw out the links with everyday life; often we think only about one side of an issue. It also often happens that we are sometimes asked to support an issue but not always given the chance to think deeply about why we should do so or not do so.
- You could ask the group to consider how this reality can affect society and how it might impact on democracy.
- How much do we actually listen to other people's arguments? How well do we make our points clear? The vaguer we are the more we promote confusion and the more we risk being misunderstood.
- How consistent are we in our opinions and ideas?

Suggestions for follow up

It is not always easy to stand up and speak out; sometimes it is unpopular to do so and, in some cases, it can also be dangerous (for example, in a conflict situation). But what we often do not realise is that we are not alone - there are others who feel the same way and who are also willing to speak out and take a stand against prejudice, intolerance or racism. There is always something you can do individually or with others.

Brain-storm together, some of the actions how you might link up with those who may be victims of intolerance and prejudice in your community – *who are they and how might you link up with them? What actions could you take to support them? How does this issue of intolerance and prejudice relate to human rights – your rights as well as 'their' rights? Are there individuals or groups in your community who engage with these issues? Could you or your group link up with them?*

10 sample statements:

- 'Men are usually more racist and intolerant than women'
- 'Foreigners don't really want to integrate into our society'
- 'Nationalism is a reactionary idea and often promotes conflict'
- 'Muslims don't respect other religions'
- 'It is better to be black than gay'
- 'Immigrants take our jobs and our houses'
- 'Travellers are their own worst enemy'
- 'Young people are usually more racist than older people'
- 'Women are the primary victims of intolerance and prejudice'
- 'The Irish want everyone to accept them abroad and give them jobs and full rights, but the Irish don't want to give jobs and full rights to foreigners'

Activity 2: Module review and evaluation (20 minutes)

Materials required: flip chart and markers.

How to proceed – list the topics covered in **Sessions 1 to 4** of this module. Ask the participants to identify:

- Things they enjoyed.
- Things they did not enjoy so much.
- What they learned about themselves.
- What they learned about others.
- Do they feel they might change some of their attitudes or behaviours?
- Which ones and why?
- Is there any additional support they might want on issues discussed?

Good Practice in facilitation and group work

Prepare well – being well prepared for the activities included here is important for success, so make sure you give yourself time to prepare well in advance and make sure you have all you need for the different sessions.

Promote feedback from the group and evaluate each session – organise a brief evaluation at the end of each session – this will help greatly in planning for further sessions and will give you valuable information about whether your objectives are being achieved or not and what changes you might need to make. When sessions are underway, encourage feedback from the group – give it the time it needs as some of the most important information and discussion arise in such feedback.

Encourage openness and discussion – work to create an atmosphere where everyone can say what they think and yet be challenged about those thoughts. Do not hide the fact that the issues are often controversial and that there are differences of opinion on the subject. Highlight the fact that every one of us has a set of basic rights regardless of gender, colour or creed. Take your time and try to ensure everyone's views are heard - encouraging openness and discussion is vital to success in this area.

Build trust and confidence in the group – work hard to build up trust amongst members of your group, value each person's contribution and encourage others to do likewise; don't put individuals down especially when challenging them. Lead by example and ask everyone to respect the fact that conversations in the group should remain appropriately confidential. Challenge gossip and inappropriate behaviour.

Give issues the time they need – issues addressed through group work are often challenging, controversial and important. So, don't rush discussions, give the group time to explore and understand the issues. Make time for breaks and for more informal discussion – it will pay off in the end.

Managing the group – it will often be helpful to work in smaller groups as well as a larger group. When exploring participants' views, it is often very useful to compare and contrast the answers of different groups – it promotes discussion and helps people realise the diversity of views that can exist in a group. Get the whole group to become comfortable working in smaller groups on a regular basis – and, remember to mix up the groups regularly!

Conclusion – take the opportunity to thank the participants and congratulate them for the work on and involvement in this module. Remind them that they can always seek your advice and support around issues that may arise in the future.