

Stepping Up Activity

Aim: Understanding equality

Requirements: a clear area big enough for the group to stand side by side and with approximately 5 metres in front of them. Print and cut out characters below.

Time: 30 minutes

Numbers: 10 plus

1. Distribute the 'characters' below to your group¹. Explain to the group that each person will be this character for the activity. (Participants can work in pairs if you have large numbers or give 2-3 people the same character). Allow the participants to take a moment to imagine their character based on the information they have – age, colour, gender, etc and to imagine their education level, job/occupation, home etc. Their character lives in Ireland – preferably in their own community. Encourage participants to use their imagination when putting themselves into the situation of their character.
2. Ask participants to line up side by side at the bottom of the room. They can be a little bit squashed at this stage if room is tight. You will need a large clear space in front of them. Ask those who feel they can answer YES to any of the statements you will read out to take one step forward (they are answering for their own character). Those who answer NO or who DON'T KNOW remain in the same place. Read out the statements below one at a time. See which character gets to the opposite end of the room first.
3. Debrief – participants should stay in the position they reached and discuss where they (their character) finished in the 'race to the top'. Who finished first? Who was lagging behind? Why? What are the reasons for this? Participants should identify types of discrimination, such as personal, community-based, cultural, institutional etc. Introduce the term 'inequality'. Ask what is needed to make the various characters in the group equal, where they would all get to the top and in so doing they would achieve equality of outcome (rather than just equality of opportunity i.e. have the same chances). Ask what could be done in your own youth group/centre to support someone to be more included and achieve their potential.
4. Some participants may have been confused about entitlements of different groups such as refugees and asylum seeker. Be sure to familiarise yourself with those differences beforehand. The refugee should be some steps ahead of the asylum seeker. For more information on asylum seekers and refugees check out www.intercultural.ie/. Alternatively ask the group to research anything they weren't aware of.

NB: if your numbers are low and you aren't use all the characters, do make sure you use the law student or medical student as it creates the biggest contrast in who reaches the top first.

¹ The pictures for the characters are all taken from Access All Areas Diversity Toolkit (artist Susan Leen)

STATEMENTS²

1. When I turn on the television or open the newspaper I expect to see people like me.
2. I can be sure that in school I will learn about the history of my group.
3. When I hear or read about our national heritage, I am told of the contributions made by people like me.
4. When I go to school, I will see people like me in the schoolbooks and hear about people like me in lessons.
5. My family can be sure of finding a suitable place to live.
6. My neighbours will be pleasant and friendly towards me and my family.
7. If I go to a doctor I can be sure that I won't be turned away because of who I am.
8. I can go into a music shop and find music of my culture.
9. I find it easy to shop at my local supermarket and get exactly what I want there.
10. I can go to hairdressers and expect to find someone who knows how to cut and manage hair like mine.
11. I can go shopping on my own, pretty sure I will not be followed, harassed or made fun of.
12. If I ask for the 'person in charge' in a shop I can be pretty sure that I will be dealing with a person like me.
13. If I do something stupid, wrong or illegal, people will not think that everyone from my group does things that are stupid, wrong or illegal.
14. I am never asked to speak for the people of my group or to describe what it is like to be from my group.
15. Whenever I use cheques or credit cards people never look at me suspiciously.
16. I am welcome in my local youth group

² Stepping Up Statements/Questions (from ADAE Act 6 – The Walk of Life)
Or use NCCRI Handout 'Majority Ethnic Group' pg. 34

A young female who uses a wheelchair



A young lesbian



A young woman who is pregnant



A young female with a mental health issue



A young Muslim woman



A young male who has been in conflict with the law



A 16 year old female who has left school before completing her final exams



A young female from an Asian background who is blind



**A young single father
with one child**



**A young migrant who speaks very
little English**



**A young Kenyan male who has lived
here for 12 years**



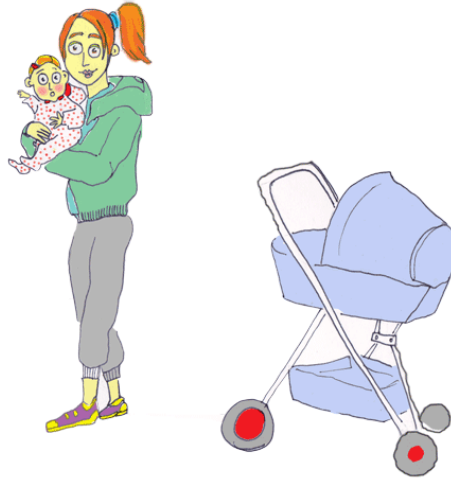
A female law student



**A recently-arrived male seeking
asylum, originally from
Somalia**



**A young mother who has problems
of addiction**



**A Kurdish male refugee who has
been here for five years**



**A young woman from a rural village.
She is deaf and lives with her elderly
mother.**



**A newly arrived European migrant,
with a family back home**



**A 16 year old female Traveller, lives
on a halting site**



A medical student from USA

