

Drum Out Child Labour

Aim: that participants in the session will understand that simply banning child labour will not solve the problem but begin to explore other possibilities.

Age: All

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Large room/open space, drum or equivalent.



What to do

Ask for a volunteer. Form two equal-sized groups – A and B. Give the two groups and the volunteer their instructions. They do not show the instructions to the other groups. Mark out a rectangular area and get group B to stand beside it. Group A retreats to the far end of the room or open space. The groups now read their instructions. The game begins when the drummer starts. Remember to be vigilant and ensure group A obeys the drumbeat. The game finishes when group B realises that to stop group A, all they have to do is stop the drummer.

Still in their groups, discuss the following:

- What happened?
- How did you feel?
- How was the situation resolved?

Instructions for Group A

- Your objective is to breach the boundaries of the rectangular area. You only need one person to cross the boundary. You can use any non-violent means.
- You have just two minutes to cross the boundary.
- You move at the pace of the drum. If the drum beats slowly, you move slowly. If the beat gets faster, your pace increases. If the drumming stops, you stop.
- If you successfully cross the boundary, you get to choose one member of group B to join your group.

Instructions for Group B

- You have to protect the boundary from group A. Only a single member of group A needs to cross the boundary. You can use any non-violent means.
- If group A is successful, they get to choose one member of your group to join their group.
- You need to protect the boundary for two minutes each time.

Instructions for the Drummer

- You decide the pace at which group A moves. You do this by beating a drum. If the drumbeat is fast, group A moves quickly. If you beat the drum slowly, group A moves slowly. If you stop drumming, group A stops.
- Vary the pace of the drumbeat as much as possible – be unpredictable!
- You are not to communicate verbally with either group unless they talk to you first.

Discussion Suggestions

- When looking at child labour, who might the groups A and B represent?
- Who or what does the drummer represent?
- How would putting a ban on children working affect the practice of child labour?
- What alternative approaches could we consider?

Note for Leaders

This activity should not be done without first introducing the topic of children working and child labour.

Source: International Institute for Environment and Development (1998). PLA Notes: participation, literacy and empowerment.



Face the Facts Four

Some Examples of Child Labour Around the World

Asia

- Bangladesh:** clothing industry
India: carpet and glass industry
Nepal: agriculture and carpet industry
Pakistan: 10 million or more in bonded labour/ brick kiln industry/ sewing footballs and manufacture of surgical instruments

Latin America and Caribbean

- Brazil:** shoe-shining/ sugar, tea, tin and charcoal production
Colombia: coal mining/ flowers/ child soldiers
Peru: domestic child workers/ sorting rubbish on dumps and gold mining

Africa

- Mozambique:** work in fields rather than attend school/domestic and informal sectors
Sierra Leone: child soldiers
Mauritania: slavery
Zimbabwe: mining and gold panning

Source: ICTU (2000). Global Solidarity Module Two: Child Labour