

Activity 17 **Paparazzi**

Aim: To explore the link between gathering information and respecting people's rights

Age: 12 + (6+ for Part One)

Time: 40 mins (15 mins for Part One)

Materials: Copies of role cards, large open space

What to do: Part 1

In the group ask for two volunteers; one will be a reporter and one will be the 'story'. Explain that the reporter is trying to write an article or get a picture of the 'story' for their news report. The aim of the game is that the reporter needs to chase the 'story' and catch them by tipping them. The 'story' needs to avoid being caught by running around the room to escape.

If the reporter catches the 'story', the roles are reversed so the reporter becomes the 'story', and the 'story' becomes the reporter.

The other participants are in pairs. Each pair stands together with arms linked and is a 'safe haven' for the 'story', they are called 'Home'. While the 'story' is running from the reporter they can stop, link arms with 'Home' and are then safe from the reporter. The person at the opposite end of 'Home' (the one that is not linked) then becomes the 'story' and must escape from the reporter. The chase continues like this until different people have the chance to be the reporter, and the 'story'. If you have a large group you can make the game more difficult by having two reporters and two stories.

Debrief: How did it feel to play the game? What was the role of the reporter? What does the reporter need to do to catch the 'story'? How did it feel to be in the role of the 'story'? Who might that 'story' be in reality? What kind of stories do reporters chase? Who might the reporter be working for? What is their aim in writing the story? Why would reporters be paid for such a story? What is the effect on the 'story' itself?

Part 2: The Editor's Den

Step 1: Ask for 2 volunteers from the group who will act as the editors. Among the other participants, form groups of three people. Distribute the role cards in the groups of 3, so that one person is the reporter, and that the other two people have 'stories' to tell.

Step 2: Explain that the reporter must get as much information from their potential stories as possible; the stories must give as many answers as they can. The reporter should try to take a photograph of the story that will help to sell it. This can be done by creating a sculpted/frozen image using one or more people.

Step 3: Give the reporters 5 minutes to get the best story they can. They must decide which story to present to the editor. To help them decide, encourage them to think about which story would attract the readers or listeners? What headline could they give the story to capture attention? What's the real information that people want to know?

Meanwhile the two editors should discuss what they are looking for in the story they will feature. Do they want a real life story about a person's life or a sensational story or headline? How much detail do they want? Is there a word they don't want to hear? What if one of the reporters uses it?

Step 4: After 5 minutes, each reporter has to present their story and image to the editor. The editor listens to all reporters, asks questions and finally announces which of the stories makes the front page or the evening news.

Debrief: Which story was chosen by the editor? Why? How did it feel to be in the role of the reporter? Was it easy to find a story? How did it feel to be in the role of the 'stories'? Did the reporter tell the whole truth? Were the stories presented in a fair way? What type of news agency do you think the editors worked for? Who else might buy the story?

Note to leader:

Caution is needed to ensure that this game does not encourage lying. Try to encourage reporters to focus on the truth of the stories. Encourage them to add details as needed, but to try to be realistic.

Rolecards: (you will need one reporter per group)

Reporter: I work for an international news agency and have been sent to this community for a half-day to find a story. I have to find an interesting story, interview the people and take photos. I hope I can sell the story when I get back. I really have to find the best story.

Peter: I am a 30 year old father of two children. My children are John who is 8 and Maria who is 11. I am a teacher in the local school. My wife died some years ago in a car accident, so my mother now lives with us and helps me to look after the children. My two children attend the primary school where I work. They are both good students and learning to speak English. I hope they get the opportunity to go to secondary school and university. I am trying to save some of my salary each month for the fees but the cost of food, electricity and petrol for my car is becoming very expensive.

Susanna: I am 16 years old and I live with my parents, 2 brothers and one sister in this village. I am the eldest in my family. My father is a farmer and I work with him in our field since I left school 4 years ago. Last year we had a lot of rain and it damaged our crops. We also couldn't take our 2 goats into the mountains to graze because of the bad weather so had to find food for them here. It was very difficult. When we harvested the crops, we had enough to eat but nothing extra to sell. We didn't have money to buy other things we need like mosquito nets for our beds, and medicine for my young brother.

Sarah: I'm 23 years old. Last year I was very sick with the flu and went to the hospital for tests. Eventually I found out that I had become HIV positive. I have told my husband and he said that he will support me through everything. He hates hospitals and especially needles so he hasn't gone to get himself tested, but I am sure that he must also have it. My biggest concern of all is telling my family. I am afraid of how they will treat me and what they will say to me. What if they don't want me around them anymore?

Shane: I'm 16 years old. Last year my brother travelled with a charity to build houses for poor people in India and he said it was a great experience. When my school organised a trip for us to do the same I was first to sign up. I think it's important that we help them out by giving them somewhere to live. I don't think of them as poor anymore because of it, and I think I'll feel really good about what I've done when I get back. I was a bit annoyed when one of my friends asked why we were building the houses, couldn't local builders do it?

Editors: You are very busy. You are responsible for all of the stories at your news agency. Your reporters like to talk a lot but you can't give them all the time they want to describe their story because you have deadlines to make. You know what makes a good story, what will attract an audience. You know what kind of headlines you like and if reporters present other types of stories, you're not interested. This is a business, not a charity, and you have to make money for the business. You also love to have good photographs.