

Activity ideas

Friends and relationships

Three discussion ideas on the nature of different types of relationship and the value of friends.

1 Relationships – who springs to mind?

Aim

To help the participants think about relationships and the people with whom we have relationships in our everyday lives.

You'll need

Large sheets of paper/flipchart; felt tip pens; blu-tac; dictionary; 35 - 45 minutes.

Process

Introduce the session by explaining to the group that they will be looking at relationships and the people with whom we have relationships in our everyday lives.

To help people think about the word 'relationship' you might want to read one or two dictionary definitions or write these on a large sheet of paper/flipchart and spread them out around the room for people to read before they split up into groups.

Split the participants up into smaller groups and ask them in their groups to discuss people with whom they think they have a relationship. Ask them to list them on a large sheet of paper. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for this activity. Then bring the participants back into a large group.

Write the word *RELATIONSHIP* at the top of the large sheet of paper/flipchart and invite small groups, in turn, to share one idea that they discussed in their small groups. Continue until all the small groups have shared their ideas. It is important to emphasize that everyone has a different type of relationship with different people.

Variations

You could ask participants to draw pictures of the people they have relationships with or use the ideas already given below rather than thinking up their own people.

You could ask participants to put their flipchart paper on the floor or walls and walk around reading each other's ideas rather than asking the small groups to give verbal feedback.

Friends and relationships

Examples of different people with whom we have relationships

Boss	Boy/Girlfriend	Parents	Brother
Sister	Partner	Social worker	School-friends
Teacher	Step-parent	Doctor	Mates
Grandparents	Neighbours	Youth workers	

2 What do you get out of relationships?

Aim

To help participants think about the reasons we have relationships with other people.

You'll need

Large sheets of paper/flipchart; felt tip pens; 45 minutes.

What to do

Introduce the session by explaining to the group that they will be looking at why relationships are important and how we benefit from them.

Split the participants up into pairs and give each pair a large sheet of paper and some felt tip/marker pens.

Ask them to think about relationships they have with other people such as friends, neighbours or someone they meet at youth club. Now ask them to write a list of reasons of why relationships are important. You might want to give them some of the words below to get them started.

Allow approximately 15 minutes for this and then bring them back to the larger group.

Invite the participants to read out their list of reasons and write these on the large sheets of paper/flipchart. Does everyone agree with all of the reasons?

Invite a discussion as to how different our lives would be without relationships with friends and relatives. Ask the participants to think of one person with whom they have a close relationship. Now ask them to imagine that they no longer have a relationship with that person. How would this affect their lives? How would it make them feel?

Variation

Rather than asking participants to think about friends or neighbours, ask them to choose one specific person from the list they made in Activity 1. They can then follow the rest of the activity with that one person in mind.

Relationships are important to....

Have fun

Prevent loneliness

Learn from others' mistakes

Try out new ideas

Make us feel we belong

Help us feel good about other people

Enable us to care about others and feel cared about

Learn new and different things

Get feedback about our views

Get support when things aren't going well

Increase self-esteem

Share things with someone

Meet new people

3 Being a good mate

Aim

To help participants think about the balance needed between being a good mate and keeping a confidence and being a good mate and getting help for a friend.

You'll need

A photocopied set of the *Dilemma cards*; 45 minutes.

What to do

Introduce the session by explaining that the group will be exploring some dilemmas to look at the conflict between keeping a confidence and seeking help for a mate.

Split participants up into groups and give each group one of the dilemma cards. Allow each group twenty minutes to read the cards and discuss the questions.

Back in the large group, give each group in turn the opportunity to read out their dilemma and their answers to the questions.

When all the groups have had a turn, invite a discussion about how the dilemmas were solved. These situations are very serious. Although the people involved in these dilemmas are risking their relationship with their friend it would be more helpful to their friend if they were to get help for them. Encourage questions and discussion about different ideas of people who can help and how to go about asking for help. It is important to recognize when someone needs urgent help and when we need to break a confidence in order to get that help.

Dilemma cards

Dilemma one

Your best friend has told you she thinks she is pregnant. She has asked you not to tell anyone as she is scared of getting into trouble.

Dilemma three

One of your friends never seems to eat anything but nobody apart from you seems to have noticed how pale and thin she is.

Dilemma two

A friend's Mum is in a wheel chair and he has to look after her and help her. You have noticed that he is very quiet and sad. He never joins in any activities after school and always rushes home.

Dilemma four

You have just found out that your mate has started taking drugs. You think he may have stolen some money also.

Ask yourselves:

What is the actual problem?

Who really needs to know?

Who could help your friend?

Why might you not tell someone?

What could happen if nobody does anything?