

Activity ideas

Campaign starters

Planning a campaign – two starting points.

1 What is a campaign?

Aim: To enable young people to differentiate between an ‘issue’ and a campaign, as campaigns are not just about one-off actions, but are part of a series of activities aiming to convince people of a particular cause or influence their decisions.

What you need: Copies of the prompt sheet, pens, paper. Approx. 35 mins.

Process

Divide the group into pairs and ask them to come up with a list of things they would like to see changed. It can range from something very small and local, through to national and global issues.

Get the young people to discuss and note down what actions they currently take or could take to set about changing the things they don’t like. Come back into one group and go through what they have come up with. Questions for discussion could include:

- Why have they chosen the actions they have?
- Are these one-off things that they will do or are they part of a wider set of actions they will take to try and get what they want?
- Is it something they do by themselves, or do they join up with other people / organisations?
- Who are they targeting with these actions?
- Why have they chosen those people?

(20 minutes)

Ask the group if any of them has ever participated in a campaign. If anyone has, ask them to tell the group a bit more about it.

Next, in two columns marked “Campaign” and “Other Action” list the things that the group feel are features of a campaign, and those that are not. Do any of the actions they listed on the prompt sheet constitute a campaign? Why? Use the ‘Prompt sheet’ to help with this part of the exercise. *(15 minutes)*

Prompt sheet

- Sign a petition
- Go on a demonstration
- Write a blog
- Wear a badge
- Fill out a survey
- Write a letter to a newspaper
- Join an organisation (like Friends of the Earth)
- Join a facebook group
- Organise a public meeting
- Wear a wristband
- Write a letter to an MP
- Stand for election
- Post something on Twitter

2 Getting your voice heard

Aim: To consider the importance of having a voice on issues of concern.

What you need: Coloured card – several different colours. Approx. 20 mins.

Process

Give the different colour cards to each participant – e.g. one third of the group gets a blue card, one third a red card and the rest a green card.

Ask the group a question to provoke a debate, e.g. “should voting be compulsory?” Go round the group and ignore the people with the red card. Do a second round and only listen to people with a green card etc.

After a few rounds, start a discussion on:

- How did it feel to be ignored/left out?
- Who might the red cards represent?...the green cards?
- Who gets left out in society?
- Who isn't listened to?...and who is?
- Who has the power in the game?

3. Have your say!

Aim: To encourage young people to have their say about issues that matter to them.

What you need: Debating topic sheet. Approx. 20-30 mins.

Note: the sheet here is just a suggestion. You could debate a topic chosen by the group or issues that are particularly relevant to them.

Process

Divide the group into two halves, to make the session easier to manage. The Chair of each group reads a statement from the list of debating topics. Then they lead the debate and get discussion going around the room. The debates will last no longer than 10 minutes. The debates should be facilitated so that everyone is encouraged to air their views.

Debating topics

- Money is one of the most important things in life...
- Voting is a waste of time...
- Reality TV is a good thing for our society...
- Libraries don't need books any more...
- Young people today are uncaring and insensitive...
- Email is a better form of communication than writing letters...
- The age for taking a driving test should be 21...
- The media spend too much time chasing celebrities...
- Mobile phones are essential to daily life...
- Anger is not a useful emotion...
- There are too many adverts...
- The voting age should be lowered to 16...
- School uniform should be abolished...

The activities are taken from the *Campaign for Change Toolkit*, available from the UK Youth storefront.

<http://stores.lulu.com/ukyouth>