Inform Educational Programme: Facilitator’s Guide

Using creative drama to enhance children’s understanding of issues related to disability and diversity

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1 Please note that informed consent was obtained from participants, and where relevant, their parents. Participants are acting out particular characters and the scenarios do not reflect their attitudes to disability or diversity. Pseudonyms have been used for the scenarios. Briefing and debriefing were undertaken to ensure that the participants were not adversely affected by the scenarios.
Introduction

There are many instances of disability related hate crimes reported each year. Research suggests that early education can influence children’s attitudes, thereby reducing prejudice. This Programme has been primarily developed for children in the age group of 7 to 10 years. The facilitators might be professionals such as teachers, social workers, educational psychologists, healthcare or community learning and development professionals working with individuals/groups, or parents working with their own child/ren.

This resource pack has been developed to support the facilitators with the activities in the sessions that they will undertake as part of the Inform Educational Programme. The activities and sessions are informed by Forum Theatre/Theatre of the Oppressed approach. In the following sections, we will introduce you to the approaches, activities and tips that you might find useful.

Each session is expected to last 40 minutes. If you have another 20 minutes available, it is suggested that you add the element of class role playing the scenario to change the oppression/discrimination. In the authors’ view, this is the most powerful aspect of the session but requires careful facilitation to ensure children’s wellbeing.

The session plans below include material that can be used for up to one hour. Please be flexible and modify the session plans according to the needs of the children you work with. You might want to have more or less sessions. These plans are for guidance rather than to force you to work in a particular way. However, we do advise that you incorporate the warm up activity and the finishing off activity in each session to ensure that you are aware of how each child is feeling before you start work with them and as a result of viewing the video clip and the discussion (and role play if undertaken).

What does the Programme offer?

The Inform Educational Programme is aimed at primary school children. Its focus is on helping children understand issues related to disabilities as well understanding the feelings of people with disabilities. The Programme focuses on these issues in a fun, safe, creative and expressive space.
Main aims and objectives

The aim is to explore meaningful issues and themes through video clips and discussions that resonate with the children and are inclusive of all, by using creative approaches to provide a safe environment. The objectives are:

- To develop children’s understanding of issues related to disability and diversity, based around creative drama performance
- To provide professionals and parents with a resource that can be used as a springboard for discussing issues of disability and diversity with children
Session 3: At play
A. Warming Up (Drama exercise) (5 minutes)

Use this game to get the group warmed up.

**One step tig** – Everyone finds a space in the room. The tigger says ‘one step’ and everyone takes a step (the aim is to get away from the tigger). Meanwhile the tigger takes one step to get closer to the others and tig them. This carries on until everybody has been tigged or by swapping the tigger with the first child to be tigged.

B. At play (Video clip) (5 minutes)

This video is based on children choosing teams to go out to play. When choosing teams, everybody apart from one child is chosen. The team captain indicates that they do not want this child in the team as they are slow. An example of discrimination by a peer has been presented.

Please play the video clip once from start to finish. After that, ask children to point out where they see discrimination and pause the video for the discussion.

C. Discussion (15 minutes)

The discussion can be undertaken in small groups or as a whole class discussion, or both. You can use the accompanying activity sheets. Ask questions about each character to ensure children understand how *any child* could have changed what was happening. Here are some examples:

i) Why do you think Dan said that?

ii) What was he thinking? Why?

iii) What was Dan feeling? Why?

iv) How do you think Hannah was feeling?

v) What could Hannah have done? Why?

vi) What do you think Susan should do? Why?

vii) What would you have done if you were in the room? Why?
D. Listening to Hannah (10 minutes)

Please view the interview of Hannah, the child left out, to understand how she felt and where she saw discrimination to have occurred. Please ask children to reflect back on their responses for C above in light of this interview.

E. Role play to change scenario (optional depending on class time) (20 minutes)

On the basis of the discussions in C above, assign the characters from the video to children and ask them to perform and try to change the scenario.

F. Finishing off (Drama exercise) (5 minutes)

Please finish off with this game.

**Go.. stop.. clap.. jump..** — Instruct the group on these instructions moving around the room. Then to really confuse them and to make it more fun, get them to do the opposite, e.g., ask them to stop when you say go, ask them to clap when you say jump, etc.

Note: Some children might be emotionally affected by the video and discussion. Please ensure everybody is comfortable and any issues have been addressed either at that time or in a one to one setting.