

**all different**  
**all equal**

# DOMINO

A manual to use peer group education as a means to  
fight racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe





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Second edition, Strasbourg 1996

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*“...Young people often speak to other young people with more credibility and effect than others. There will be different views among the young about various aspects of immigration and refugee policies. The point is not to agree on everything, but on the essentials needed to protect the most vulnerable groups. If youth speaks to youth and for youth in schools, clubs and the media, taking a clear distance against racism and intolerance, then the days of xenophobic sub-cultures will be numbered, which is precisely what we would like to see happen. It is our young people who carry all our hopes for the future. They are the coming generations within which civility, tolerance and dignity will continue to guide countries and peoples...”*

**Gro Harlem Brundtland,  
Prime Minister of Norway,  
1993.**

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# Section 1

## Introduction

The Council of Europe Youth Campaign “all different - all equal” aims to mobilise the public in favour of a tolerant society based on the equal dignity of all its members. Young people play an important role in promoting the message of the campaign.

The potential of young people in acting for other young people and adults to create the societies of tomorrow is often underestimated and rarely taken into consideration by adults. The marginalisation of the ‘youth’ as a particular sociological and easy-to-define group in society often leads to the assumption that young people’s action is taken only in a protected, isolated space within European societies.

The value of education for young people by young people has always been a central concept of the youth work within the Council of Europe and the co-operating youth organisations. The strong influence members of peer groups insert on each other determines both formal and informal education to a great extent. Planned and conscious application of these mechanisms in educational approaches and concepts have proven particularly successful in the fields of health education, sex education and drugs prevention.

However, to date few elaborate programmes exist on peer group education as a means to promote tolerance and accept diversity. As part of the European Youth Campaign’s programme, this publication ‘Domino’ tries to promote peer group education within formal and informal educational settings. DOmino is aimed at youth and social workers, teachers and youth leaders, as well as young people wishing to get involved in such programmes. DOmino forms part of a series of measures taken by the Council of Europe’s youth sector in the field of peer group education: an international training course and a conference on the subject in 1995, as well as the subventions given to pilot projects on peer group education in the framework of the Youth Campaign ‘all different -all equal’.

DOmino is also a further step in a series of publications of the youth sector of the Council of Europe on education for tolerance, such as ‘ALIEN 93 - youth organisations combating racism and intolerance’ (published in 1993 as a result of the work of the Advisory Committee of the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation) and the ‘Education Pack - Ideas, Tools and Resources for Intercultural Education’, published in 1995 also within the programme of the European Youth Campaign.

## **How to work with DOmino**

Recipes for educational work do not really exist, particularly not recipes of similar value for all European societies. Youth and social workers, youth leaders and teachers most constantly adapt and react to the special requirements of young people and their particular social environment. DOmino tries to give some assistance to those working or planning to work with young people on peer group education projects.

The different sections of DOmino contain some theoretical background on peer group education as well as different project descriptions, methods, quotes and stories from young people. The references to resources used have been put in brackets and the sources can be found in the bibliography at the end of this publication.

DOmino is the result of different youth work practices in several European countries, both in the formal and informal educational sector. The editors have drawn from experiences in youth organisations, youth initiatives and schools. The existing diversity in Europe is also reflected in the presentation of different practical approaches, aimed at enriching the dialogue between and amongst young people and adults.

It is up to you to choose the most appropriate way to implement a programme in your own social environment and the editors of DOmino hope to have been able to assist you in your important work in empowering young people to build the Europe of tomorrow with dignity for all its people.

*Strasbourg, July 1995*

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*We apologise for errors and omissions and regret that we were not able to include all materials received.*



## Section 2

### What is Peer group Education?

#### Definitions

*Peer group. Technically a peer group is any collectivity in which the members share some common characteristics, such as age or ethnicity. It most commonly refers to age groups in general, but more specifically to adolescent groups where members are closely bound together by youth culture. Adolescent peer groups tend to have: (1) a high degree of social solidarity, (2) hierarchical organisation, (3) a code which rejects, or contrasts with adult values and experience. From an adult perspective, peer groups are often deviant because delinquency is supported by the rewards of group membership.' (A peer is a member of a peer group.)*

**(Abercrombie, 1988)**

*Peer group education is a method of information transference or role modelling where a particular type of behaviour is promoted or information transferred. The peer educators closely match the target group in some manner; whether it is by age, sexuality, gender, etc.'*

**(Brammer/Walker, 1995)**

Within this publication we have focused on work with young people between the ages of 14 and 20 years, although for many peer group education and peer led programmes of young people taking part, ages do vary enormously.

#### Young people as educators

Young people are often portrayed in a negative light, as trouble makers, as instigators and aggressors, the causes of many social problems. By giving young people opportunities to create their own programmes of education and information, qualities like commitment, loyalty and idealism can be engendered.

Peer group education programmes enable young people to deal with problems that affect them. The process can be partly social, establishing forums for young people to explore new frontiers, helping to solve problems and let people in power gain an understanding of the point of view of young people.

Peer group pressure is traditionally seen as a negative pressure on young people, where young people 'learn their bad habits like drug taking and smoking'.

To use such dynamics in a positive manner is the challenge of peer education.

*'A peer who understands a teen's fierce need for independence and maturity, and can temper those needs with responsibility and thoughtfulness is in a crucial position to correct misinformation and shape group values without losing credibility among youth, adolescents can be extremely influential in shaping the behaviour and values of their friends, particularly in risk taking situations.'*

**(Centre for Population Options, USA, 1993)**

For many young people it is their peer group that influences values and behaviours. Peer led methods have been around for many centuries in many different forms, from the writing of Aristotle to the eighteenth century monitorial systems which were popular in Europe. Many have noted the benefits of working with children and young people in an educational setting, whether formally or informally, **helping them to help themselves.**

We know that social or peer groups play an important part in the socialisation of the young. During adolescence peer groups can play an increasingly influential role in a young person's life. Certainly the average child spends a larger portion of time with peers than with his or her parents particularly during adolescence. J. Root in an educational research article entitled "The Importance of Peer Groups", claimed that because peer groups matter to children they also matter to their education. He argues for the recognition of peer groups as an integral part of learning strategies. It is because of this empathy and similar life experiences peer educators have a distinct advantage over their professional counterparts in informing and educating.

Within DOmino we explore the many issues raised within peer group education; about control of the young people involved in peer group programmes; their relationships to adults as teachers, trainers or coaches; the partnerships developed between youth and community workers as leaders or coaches, and the rationale behind developing such programmes. These sections are illustrated with examples of good practice. Practical exercises and games are included which aim to help those wishing to establish programmes and develop existing work with young people.

## **A glimpse at the history of peer education**

As well as the writings of Aristotle in Ancient Greece, Dr Andrew Bell developed one of the earliest documented examples of a peer education approach with his monitorial system in a Madras school in India. Like Bell, Joseph Lancaster later identified peer led approaches in the late eighteenth century through school programmes where under a carefully planned supervision, disadvantaged young people taught reading, writing and arithmetic to their peers. Lancaster and his contemporaries identified these early monitorial systems as *'value for money, a way of maximising the use of their limited resources'*

**(Lancaster, 1805).**

*'The dissemination of the Bell-Lancaster system through Denmark, England, France, Greece, Italy, Norway and Sweden constitutes one of the most amazing educational movements of all time... It's success was due to it's comparative effectiveness at a time when cheapness was the prime consideration.'*

**(Pollard, 1982)**

Lilya Wagner in her comprehensive history of peer teaching examines the development of peer education acknowledging the work of the Swiss educationalist Pestalozzi working with orphan children in Switzerland. Pestalozzi developed a more informal approach to peer teaching than Bell and Lancaster had.

*'... drilling one child through an artificial machinery of lifeless tasks and the child so drilled they employ to drill others in the same manner and by the same means.'*

**(Leitch, 1876)**

An 1831 American report numbered almost two thousand monitorial schools each in Denmark, Sweden, Spain and Sardinia. The Dutch had earlier developed a system which was taken on by the English. This time of reform and development within the educational authorities of nineteenth century Europe influenced greatly the development of educational theory in other parts of the world.

Lancaster and others describe how these early formal systems were beneficial to the monitors themselves.

*'Lancaster was shrewdly aware of the stimulating effect of being a monitor not only on a boy's learning but also on his behaviour. Lively, active tempered boys are the most frequent transgressors of good order; and the most difficult to reduce the reason; the best way to form them is by making monitors of them.'*

**(Goodland, 1979)**

In the late 1950's, peer education had a revival in Europe, Canada, USA and Australia and continued to be pursued as an effective approach to communicating and education sometimes hard to reach young people with messages about health, welfare and social issues. At the University of Minnesota (USA) in the early 60's, programmes were developed to help minority youth learn about science and mathematics, this and others in Chicago and Sacramento identified the role of the adult as a distant coach in the peer education process.

It is well documented that peer led methodology reduces the number of barriers between teacher and taught where young people are trained to be the educators. Paulo Freire the South American educationalist, highlighted what he called 'teacher/student contradiction' (reference, Freire 1972), which can act as barriers to learning and development. Peer led approaches whether in formal settings or in very informal ways can - if planned and resourced - affect attitudes and behaviour positively to a great extent.

In recent years, peer education has been widely applied to many issues particularly those around HIV disease, AIDS prevention, sexual education, drug abuse and smoking cessation. On the African and Asian continents limited resources and the need for effective educational approaches to stem the AIDS pandemic has led to many programmes which build on the energy and efficacy of young people. In Europe, USA and Australia the development of peer group education in the context of health is well documented, reaching young people who are not in communication with health and education authorities.

## **Rationale of Peer Education**

There are many reasons why peer group education is used as an educational approach to deal with specific issues. Commentators suggest a contemporary rationale for using peer education (Manchester University), looking at four main points:

- 1. Efficacy**
- 2. Communication**
- 3. Cost effectiveness**
- 4. Empowerment**

### **1. Efficacy**

Young people are ready made experts, they may have a perspective on the issues as they affect young people in similar situations and can often 'make things happen', if encouraged and resourced.

### **2. Communication**

Young people can be ready made role models. As members of their peer group they will have the potential to determine effective styles and approaches. This may be through workshops and games, music and mass media, discussion and story telling. Young people will be best placed to devise such methods.

### **3. Cost-effectiveness**

Where resources are limited and large numbers have to be reached peer group education can have a multiplier effect. Such programmes can also have informal, knock-on or cascade effects, creating 'buzz' in the local community.

### **4. Empowerment**

If carefully planned, young people can control the process of education and information exchange. This will depend on the setting in which a programme is operating, Peer group education can help to foster youth participation in programmes of formal and informal education.

## **Peer education, peer learning and peer led approaches**

There is clearly many different approaches to peer group education, in the following a descriptions distinction is made between different settings. For some a more formal educational approach may be appropriate whilst for another programme young people may be involved on a grass roots level.

Peer group education can be applied in different educational settings. There is not 'the only way' to do it - a diversity of approaches exists.

For the facilitation of the planning and to avoid confusion, three general pillars can help to draw a dividing line between these three different pillars:

### **1. Peer group education in formal educational settings**

Peer group education in schools is initiated by the teachers with the aim to subsequently give over the responsibility of the programme to the students and pupils. During the process of the programme the role of the teacher changes from initiator and teacher to facilitator and consultant, in the ideal case, the teacher should eventually become redundant for the succession of the programme.

In methodological terms, this could mean teacherless groups, pairing of students, proctoring (reference, Keller, 1968) and the opening of formal educational settings to a wider public.

(Project reference in section 5: The mediation programme in schools of the Jugendbildungswerk Offenbach, Germany)

### **2. Peer group education in informal educational settings**

Peer group education in 'out-of-school education' is relevant for youth organisations, youth services, youth agencies and youth and social work in general. The aim to give young people the responsibility for the education of other young people can be achieved by the continuity of the out-of-school sector. The challenge to the adults in out-of-school education is the step by step retreat out of peer group education programmes. Working towards loss of 'control' and allowing for action alongside the structured programmes of organisation, agencies and services. Peer group education programmes can reach out to a wider public than only to the 'members' of the organisation and institutions and can therefore bring about synthesis and enrichment.

(Project reference in section 5: The prejudice reduction programme of NCBI, the programme of RFSL in Stockholm).

### **3. Peer group education initiated by young people - grass roots initiatives**

Young people feel the urge to gain the support of other young people for a subject or issue they consider important or feel strongly about. Consequently they organise action with multiplying effects. This is the 'pure' peer group education without any adult influence, peer led from the beginning to the end of a 'project'.

(Project reference in section 5: The Stop the Violence programme in Denmark, The Guardian Angels)



## Section 3

### Why use peer group education for the campaign 'all different - all equal'?

*10 Points on why to use peer group education in a campaign against racism and intolerance*

#### **1. Peer group education fights racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of intolerance by means familiar to youth**

Racial prejudice is strongly connected to group identity and group behaviour. It has much to do with how the individual perceives himself or herself as a member of a distinctive social and ethnic group in relation to other groups. At the same time, adolescence is a crucial moment in life development, a time when individual identity is formed. The loosening of family ties can give way to various options of group identity. Ethnicity as a clearly distinctive identity may become extremely important in this phase of life.

Peer group education takes its strength from unfolding the leadership potential of individual young people and relies on in-group values of youth. It transmits its message through these channels which play an important part in adolescence.

#### **2. Each young person knows discrimination from his or her own experience**

Racism and xenophobia is - amongst other things - a reflection of power structures: the powerful discriminate against the powerless.

The same can be said for 'adulthood'. By this term we describe the system prevailing in most modern societies which gives more status and respect to acts and opinions of adults as compared to the acts and decisions of the youth. Children and youngsters generally are told and taught that they have to wait until adulthood to be fully respected. Since young people have much less power than adults do, they are discriminated against. Thus, young people all know somehow what discrimination feels like. Not being taken seriously, having their legitimate wishes denied because you are a child actually is everyone's first experience of discrimination in our society (for further reference see: Miller, 1979; van den Broeck, 1993; Jungk/Muellert 1989).

Later in life young people form peer groups and gain strength through this new group identity. Strong peer groups and strong peer group behaviour is an answer to the power gap between young people and adults.

In the power struggle among - socially or ethnically - different groups of young people, peer groups and their values play an important role. If racist, xenophobic or anti-semitic ideas and intolerant behaviour prevail, then peer groups can form a vehicle for these ideas (in-group against out-groups). It is especially important to break these patterns and to substitute them with non-racist values and attitudes and the ability to welcome diversity. Peer group education would seem the 'system-inherent' educational means for that.

### **3. Peer group education can create empowerment and a pride in leadership**

Racism, anti-semitism, xenophobia and intolerance in general have their source in feelings of powerlessness and suffered mistreatment. *'Human beings have to be mistreated systematically before they will mistreat others'* (reference: National Coalition Building Institute, 1992).

Ultra-nationalist and racist, anti-semitic and xenophobic movements come in right here by manipulating the feelings of inferiority resulting from such mistreatment. They offer a seemingly superior identity based on violence and the oppression of others.

Peer group education empowers young people to take action and form leadership. It gives pride to what young people can achieve. These positive feelings make it easier to look at past 'hurts' sources of mistreatment.

### **4. Shared feelings open the way to welcoming diversity**

Discrimination represents a form of group oppression. Groups of human beings are labeled as "dirty", "useless", "dangerous", "greedy", "violent" - without considering the character of individual members of a certain group. The victim, however, is hurt as a single "individual" and suffers from the discrimination "individually". The pain of discrimination is expressed in shame and often enough, is turned into violent rage which aims at covering the shame.

By sharing experiences of mistreatment and the sorrow about it amongst peers, the shame can be shared and will eventually fade away. Individual and group identity are both strengthened through solidarity.

A feeling of positive pride in one's own identity arises and can free the way to accept the other one's pride in his or her own and different identity. Understanding oneself leads to understanding others. Diversity can therefore become a positive value in life.

*“Black and white youth share common experiences and problems, like unemployment, schooling or homelessness. Instead of alliances there are often divisions and scapegoating. The attempt to discover racial and ethnic themes within the fabric of local urban life promises to be a slow and hesitant process but one which offers the possibility of creating alliances.”*

(Ritchie/Marken, 1986, page 17)

#### **5. Peer group education against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism substitutes old group values by new ones**

Racist and intolerant behaviour often forms a contagious behavioural pattern within a group of youth - the same is valid of other forms of oppression such as sexism, discrimination against people with disabilities etc. Nobody in the group dares speak out and stand up against a racist group leader or a racist group. Thus the climate is slowly poisoned.

Peer group leaders create new role models which can set new values for the group and positive standards which can also become attractive for other groups members as well.

#### **6. Peer group education against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance can create a snowball effect among a wider group**

Racism and other forms of intolerance easily have a contagious effect on a group environment and can poison the atmosphere. Successful and attractive experiences of peer group education programmes, are soon shared with others in the group and can form a counter-movement. Successful action can also win over any adults who first may have been reluctant to join in.

#### **7. Peer group education against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance keeps ideals alive**

Young people who have had the chance to grow up without suffering heavy mistreatment can be full of idealism and love for the world and for human beings of all kinds. They have not yet been ultimately conditioned by greed, competition and chauvinism which is inherent in our social system. Their intuition tells them when wrong is done and when discrimination is happening.

Peer group action against racism presents a chance which enables young people not to lose these ideals but rather to recognise them as a common bond for changing the world. An “adultist” attitude (see above under 2.) would tell them that they will soon have to give up their ideals and adapt to the “realities of life”. Peer group action against racism tells them that they are right in their perception of the world as it could be and empowers them to make ideals become true.

This empowerment can have an impact on other aspects of their lives which are not necessarily directly connected to the original issue.

## **8. Success motivates and leads to further successful action**

Positive individual and group experiences and successful leadership give courage to go further. If a peer group could solve a minor racial dispute, in the youth club for example, through a common effort and peer group trained skills, this can create a positive impetus.

Peer group education gives opportunities for learning and training skills through organising an anti-racist event, writing letters to the newspaper, speaking in public, leading a workshop etc. By passing on training skills, to deal with smaller racist incidents capabilities will grow to handle more difficult problems such as inter-group conflicts or violence. Group dynamics among the peers are of much importance. Team building can help to change whole institutions in a slow but on-going process. It might lead from a 'first crisis intervention' to 'crisis prevention' by changing attitudes and the general atmosphere within the peer group and the institution involved.

## **9. Self-confident youth challenge the adults' world**

Racist and xenophobic attitudes and disparities in the treatment of ethnic, religious or sexual minority groups might form a part of the structure of the school or youth organisation that wants to launch a peer group education project against racism.

The reluctance of institutions to a) generally start anti-racist programs and b) start a peer education programme, may be encountered. Underlying fears to make necessary institutional changes and the question of authority are often cited as reasons. By freeing creative forces in young people, peer group programmes against racism can challenge certain racist attitudes, the power structures and ethnic disparities within the system. It is young people's enthusiasm and the obvious turn for the better which can break through these institutional barriers.

*"Establishing anti-racist work will depend to some extent on how far youth work is prepared to suffer the discomfort of recognising both its own racism and its failure to develop a significant response to racism of its white clients"*

(Ritchie/Marken, 1986, page 7)

## **10. Peer group education can change the home environment of youth**

Youth engaged in peer group programmes against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance will come home with new ideas of how the world could be. They will probably confront their parents with these values, or let them know about their new contacts with ethnically different groups. This could stir some tension but can ultimately lead to a shift in attitudes in their family. When parents see that their children are happier and more fulfilled they may let go some of their own prejudicial ideas. The snowball effect can incite new anti-racist activities in the home environment or neighbourhood.

## Section 4

### Stories told by young people

*Hello, my name is Melanie and I'm 21 years old. The greatest difficulty for me is that as a person of mixed origin (half Ivory Coast and half Swiss) I am at home neither here nor there. Wherever I am, I am regarded as being foreign, either "white" or "black". It happens to me when I live in my mother's country of origin, in Switzerland, and it happened to me when I was living in my father's country, Ivory Coast. I would feel at home where I could feel that people accept me just the way I am!*

*When you are a small child you first do not feel that you are different from the others. But soon the others will make you feel different - and children too can be very cruel in their behaviour against the "strange child".*

*Sometimes incredible incidents happen. Some time ago I was riding my bike somewhere in a little place in Switzerland nearby to where I live. A car drove by, and the male driver opened the window and yelled at me: "Scheiss-Neger - dirty nigger!" I virtually froze. I felt helpless and unable to defend myself. When I looked at the number plate, I saw that it was a German number plate. This means that the insulting person himself was a foreigner in this country! How could he dare insulting me like this? I felt that I wanted to kill this man. When I recovered I was able to think about it more clearly. These racist people are just stupid and do not know anything about life.*

*Intolerance really is the thing that bothers me most. I think that everybody is different and everybody has the right to be different - without exception, no matter what the mentality, the colour of skin or the religion is. But this doesn't mean that he or she must be a second class human being because of these differences. Tolerating something doesn't mean that you have to agree with everything; it just means that you try to accept it unconditionally. May people be much more open-minded to foreigners and their way of life: that's my wish!*

**Melanie, 21, Switzerland**

*My name is Nikola Bobann, I'm half Danish and half Bosnian. I want to write about an incident I had 3 years ago. I had just finished business college and was applying for this job in a big, well respected company. I had all the necessary diplomas and qualifications and was self-confident. So I delivered my application personally just to make a good impression.*

*The company told me that I would have an answer within a month. I waited two months for a reply and then I decided to withdraw my application. I was disappointed but at the same time I had to find out what the reasons were for the silence.*

*I went to the company for the second time and got to talk with the manager. He sat behind a big table full of papers and he asked me why I had withdrawn my application and I answered. He reached out for two piles of papers and asked for my name. I told him my name and he looked surprised and asked me where I came from. I had to find out that one of the piles had familiar Danish names and the other pile had only foreign names.*

*At that time I understood his astonished face - it was because of my blue eyes and blond hair - he thought I was a Dane, but according to the application form I was a foreigner.*

*This experience made me realise the race problem even in well respected companies, which are supposed to have an intelligent workforce.*

**Nikola Bobann, Denmark**

*Hello! My name is Juliana Violari, I'm from Cyprus and I'm 18 years old and I'm half Catholic and half Orthodox. But this is not the only special thing in my life. I'm also a child of parents who are in the Turkish area since 1974. Because I have to study I came to the South part of the island. When I was 12 I left home and went to Nicosia to school. I could only visit my family during school holidays, at Christmas, Easter and during the summer break. This was the situation until last year when I turned 17 years. Since last year I am not allowed to visit my family. My parents are allowed to visit us, my brothers and sisters and me, once the month.*

*When I was 13 years old I went to visit my parents during Christmas holidays and I really had a good time. When the holidays were over I returned to the Greek area to continue with school. But things didn't turn out so fine. When we reached the so called "Green Line" the Turkish border police would not allow us to go to the Greek side. They said that if we went to the Greek side we would never again get a permit to visit our family. I felt like the world was ending. I didn't know what to do and what to think. How could they ask me such a thing? How can they stop me from being in my own home with my own family? How could they? But I couldn't do anything about it. The Turks thought that this was one way so they can make us leave our home. But they couldn't achieve it. After that many problems arose but I have never felt as bad as on that day. Even after all these problems my family didn't think about leaving home and moving to the Greek side. I just hope that I'll never feel like this again. After all it is one of the Human Rights to be able to live where ever you want in your own country. And all that because I'm Greek and they are Turkish. That's the reason.*

**Juliana Violari, 18, Cyprus**

*I am a 24 year old Hungarian Jew living in Budapest. When I was still studying in High School I felt intolerance more than ever before and after. Once we had a chemistry class and we studied the process of soap producing. At a certain point one of my classmates in the first row turned around and shouted: "Gabor! Do you hear this?" In the context it was clear we he meant. I found also sentences on the black board like "Gabor! Go back to Israel" or "Stinky Jew". The word Jew or Gipsy was generally used as a four letter word. Teachers did nothing on this issue.*

**Gabor Rona, 24 , Budapest**

*Hi, I'm Anna from Poland and I'm 20 years old. I would like to tell you about a situation in which I felt really bad. It happened already one year ago, but I can still remember it very clearly. I was on a student exchange in Holland. I lived with a very friendly family, whose daughter Sandra visited me later on in Poland. Sandra and I met (on our way home from shopping), a boy from Sandra's neighbourhood. He didn't say "hello" to me, but only to her and spoke only in Dutch. I do not understand this language, but I felt that he told her something about me. When I was gone I asked Sandra to tell me what he talked about. Let me repeat the short dialogue, Sandra had with her neighbour:*

*Sandra: "Hi, how are you?"*

*He: "Well, I am fine. I do not have any Polish at home."*

*For me this was really awful - I did not understand why my friend did not tell him off. Her mother told me that he was probably jealous that he was not able to invite somebody from abroad to his home. I do not know. Maybe the mother was right. But I think the guy was not even aware about the stupidity of his behaviour. Such people are deplorable!*

**Anna Smolen, 20, Poland**

*My name is Daniel, I am 21 years old and I live in Denmark. I want to write about an incident I had three years ago. I was at my best friends birthday and we were all celebrating. After the party we decided to go to a discotheque in town. When we got there the group split up and I went to the bar to get something to drink.*

*At the bar I noticed a man who looked at me in a strange way. I did not like his looks and the situation but I did not pay much attention. Suddenly the man walked towards me and asked me where I had bought my tie. I thought it was a funny question, but I did not mind as I felt open and I wanted to meet new people. I answered his question and suddenly he took a knife out of his pocket, grabbed my tie and cut it of. Then he slashed the knife towards my hips and walked away. All this happened in the discotheque. I was shocked and first idea was to run away. On the way to get my jacket I noticed I was bleeding. It didn't hurt or look serious, but I was frightened. The police came and I reported what had happened. Although they caught the guy they couldn't do anything -they didn't find witnesses or the weapon and the man was let free again.*

*Since this happened I had a lot of difficulties. I was scared all the time and felt uncomfortable in big crowds of people. I did not trust people any more - so I lost a lot of my friends. I attended a therapy group but this didn't work, either.*

*I often wonder if the person who stabbed me ever realised what he did that night.*

**Daniel, 21, Denmark**

*Hello. My name is Marcella, I'm 23 years of age. I was born in Colombia, but I'm living in Sweden for 5 years. The reason I left Colombia is rather complicated, but one of them is the fact that I'm transsexual. For those who don't know what that is, I will shortly explain it. I was born with the body of a boy, but deep in my soul I've always known that I'm a woman. To be able to live, I'm going through a long process, and right now I'm in the middle of it. Yet, I haven't changed sex but I'm eating hormones and I really look like a woman now. It's very tough to be Columbian and transsexual living in Sweden. Often I'm discriminated twice, if you know what I mean. People have beaten me up, not only physically but also in a verbal way. Until now my life has been a mess, but as I have the possibility to change sex I'm very happy. Someday I hope people accept me for the person I am. I'm not a pervert, or strange in any way, I'm just a person who wants to be happy.*

**Marcella, 23, Sweden**

*My name is Tedros Tesfaye. I'm 20 years old. I was born in Ethiopia but now I'm living in Sweden. I want to tell you a true story where I was discriminated. In the summer of 1992, I was in Stockholm with 2 friends. We had been at a gay club, afterwards we went to McDonalds for a hamburger. At the gay club, there had been a masquerade, so we were dressed a bit "different".*

*At McDonalds most of the people, just thought we looked funny, but they didn't mind. But there was this guy who didn't like our appearance very much. This guy was very drunk and he began to argue with us. He asked me if I was queer and I said "Yes, do you have a problem with that?" Of course he did and he told me what he wanted to do with me. He didn't like the fact that I was alive. He wanted me to dig my own grave, and then he would strangle me he said. I was very upset, and as his friends arrived, I was very afraid and ran away. The last thing I heard from him was that I was a gay nigger with no right to exist. I will never forget this, but one thing is for sure, nobody can take my dignity away from me.*

**Tedros Tesfaye, 20,  
Black, happy queer living in Sweden**

## Section 5

### Examples of good practice

During the preparation phase for DOmino a questionnaire was sent out to youth organisations, youth services and youth initiatives asking for descriptions of innovative peer group education projects. We would like to thank all those who answered this questionnaire, we regret that we could only include a small selection of the project descriptions.

In the following, you will find five project descriptions showing different approaches of peer group education as a means to combat intolerance and violence. Those projects reflect the different approaches described in Section 2 of Domino, i.e. projects in formal and informal educational settings and peer led or 'grass roots' initiatives. The addresses at the end of each project description will help you seek further information.

#### **5.1. The Peacemaker-project in Offenbach/Germany An example for peer mediation in schools**

A peacemaker is a person who helps others to end quarrels. In many cultures, especially older ones, such people are highly regarded. They have various names, but they all have the common role of finding solutions for quarrels without violence or injury. Such human traditions are important in our modern societies, where problems are more complicated and conflicts are more confused than ever before.

We have therefore taken this traditional model for a project on conflict resolution in the schools of Offenbach, Germany. The project is being run by the local Youth and Education Office, part of our National Youth Service, which organises educational events to co-ordinate the activities of the different institutions that work with children and young people in our town.

**The peacemaker-project** forms part of a larger pilot project, "**violence-prevention**", and was developed on the basis of two theoretical approaches: peer group education and mediation. This project was also granted financial support by the European Steering Group of the European Youth Campaign.

#### **The significance of peer group education in formal and informal educational settings for projects outside the school curriculum.**

Peer group education in schools has a long history. The idea of helping relationships between students in formal school settings has been utilised by teachers for centuries. Some authors trace peer teaching back to the ancient Greeks and

Romans, others just to the Middle Ages. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century however that peer teaching started to be used on a large scale in Great Britain and America. In the other European countries it was practised but to a lesser degree.

With industrialisation knowledge of reading and writing became a necessity even for the poor, but there were neither teachers nor schools to satisfy the requirements. It was in this context that educational approaches such as Andrew Bell's **Madras-system** and the **Monitorial-system** of Joseph Lancaster were put into practice. Under these systems teachers taught a few students (monitors) who then became responsible for passing on what they had learnt to the rest of the children. The method used group teaching in a very formal and usually very authoritarian within these situations were very effective.

However as the educational system of the western world developed in the nineteenth century, the monitorial system became less appropriate. Only in the smaller one-class schools were the methods of peer teaching still practised. For the developing world, especially in Latin America it continued to be a valuable way of teaching people to read and write. For this reason peer group education was for a long time identified as a cheap method of teaching basic literary skills.

In educational discussion however, attention was not paid to the benefits of peer group education. Benefits which we now see as valuable in the modern school system: children who do not respond well to adults will often learn more from peer tutors; and the tutors themselves benefit by learning the skill of teaching. The idea of students learning through helping each other is a positive alternative to the traditional system of learning through competing with others.

In the last twenty years the benefits of peer group education have been rediscovered in the educational debate, especially in Great Britain and the USA. Today in our developed education systems in Europe we have no lack of schools and teachers to teach the fundamental skills, but outside the field of "fact-learning" the formal methods are rarely effective. We are seeing more and more open discussion among young people about violence, intolerance, abuse of drugs etc. It is this latter context where peer group teaching can be an important addition to formal education and can significantly contribute to the humanisation of schooling.

### **The necessity of conflict resolving in a constructive way for children and young people and the process of mediation.**

For many young people violence is the most effective way of resolving problems. They get no pleasure out of violence but to them there appears to be no other solution. They learn from adults that it is acceptable to eliminate competitors for one's own success. They see films which show that you only achieve in this world through violence and they don't want to be considered weak in their peer group.

We would think that children and young people can learn the non-violent attitudes and that they are capable of resolving many of their problems themselves. However, it is evident that our abilities to handle conflicts in a constructive way have not kept pace with the technical and social development in our societies. It is therefore

necessary to break through this cycle of violence and counter violence among young people. There are various models to handle conflicts in a democratic and non-violent way.

One of these non-violent approaches is “mediation”, solving a conflict through a third person. A third person can help the fighting parties to find a solution which suits both sides and create what is known as a win-win situation. The mediator leads the opponents through a stage-by-stage-process to clarify the problems and the motives and to find an acceptable solution.

The method of mediation was developed in the USA and has been used there for 20 years or so in various fields - in neighbourhood quarrels, in marriage conflicts and also in the so-called offender-victim compensation in youth criminal law. The most important condition - and also the most important restriction - is the voluntary readiness of all participants to take part in discussion and to look for a solution. The mediator can help both parties to find solutions, but he/she can't settle their problems for them.

### **The structure of the model project “violence-prevention” in Offenbach**

In June of 1993 Offenbach Town Council asked the Youth Office to develop a programme against violence, racism, anti-semitism and right-wing extremism. The background was the increasing racism in Germany in the nineties and the success in the local elections of the right-extremist party, the “Republicans”. In the last local elections the party won 15% of the election votes in Offenbach, and in some districts more than 30%. The council recognises that this is a potentially dangerous situation for Offenbach, especially taking into account that it is the town with the highest rate of migrant people in Germany. Every third resident in Offenbach does not possess a German passport.

The Youth Educational Office began to work on a pilot project, which was accepted last year and is now running. The main objectives of this project are:

- a) The implementation of a system of constructive problem resolving in the schools and youth institutions of Offenbach.

*This is done by using three working methods;*

- to make “conflict profiles” of classes or groups of young people in schools, kindergarten and youth centres, in order to find out the existing problems and conflicts.
- to develop programmes for children and young people to handle conflicts in a constructive way. The most important programme of this type is the “peacemaker-programme” which involves conflict mediation and training for constructive problem resolving.
- to train teachers and social workers in the methods of conflict resolving. In this step by step training the teachers learn the methods of counselling children and young people with problems.

- b) The building of an infrastructure for tolerance and human rights education.

- c) The setting up of a local network and an information service for schools and youth centres.

### **The Peacemaker-Project of mediating conflicts between students**

The basis of this project are the experiences of peer group education. It involves the transfer of mediation into the educational process and the trust in children to solve their own problems.

*What happens in a peer mediation process is something like this:*

Two students have a quarrel. There is not necessarily violence, but there is unhappiness and tears. They each decide (and it must be their decision) to ask for the help of a mediator. All four pupils - two disputants, and two mediators go through a stage-by-stage process which involves the mediators listening to the disputants, identifying their feelings and needs and then agreeing on a course of action. The culmination comes when the disputants sign a short contract and shake hands.

This scenario shows the mediation process when it is introduced in a class or a school and helped by the teachers. In the next three years we hope to create the conditions for this type of process to be put into practise.

As a first phase we have developed a training programme for the students and the teachers. In the process of building this training programme we saw that not all students are able to act as mediators, either because they are not interested or because they have too little appreciation in their group.

We have therefore developed the training programme in two ways. We have trained a group of delegates from various classes (10-12 years old) in a course in mediating conflicts made up of two 2 days and three afternoons of 3 hours. After the training we introduced them as mediators in their classes.

In a second course we worked with a whole class for 5 units of 3 hours and held an election for the mediators. With the chosen students we have then gone through a separate training programme of mediation. The students who completed the training course received a certificate, or a "peacemaker-card". In this process we have seen that it is very important that the teachers help the students in their class and that other teachers and parents accept the mediators. We now run training courses for the teachers who help the students and information meetings for the parents. These activities were the basis for a constructive atmosphere at the "Schiller-Schule" a large secondary school where the project was first introduced. In the second phase we established the developed training programme in the other classes and began to implement the peacemaker-programme in the following steps:

- We run a training course for teachers from 6 classes. The teachers learn the basic exercises for problem resolving in a constructive way and the basic rules of mediation.
- These teachers then run the first parts of the training for pupil up until the election of the mediators, where approximately 6 students from each class are chosen. This is known as the run-phase.

- Then we build two courses with the elected students from these 6 classes and go with them through the mediation training course. These courses are lead by educated trainers without the teachers.
- When the trained mediators are introduced in their classes we monitor their activities and organise regular meetings for mediators.
- At the same time we organise various meetings and activities to encourage discussion between the schools about these projects. Such activities have included a prize-competition, schoolyard-theatre and other events.

The project was started in October 1994. The first experiences we have made are very encouraging and we are often astonished how quickly the children have found new solutions to conflicts.

*For further information contact:*

Jugendbildungswerk der Stadt Offenbach  
Taunusstr. 32  
D - 63067 OFFENBACH  
Germany  
Tel/Fax: + 49 69 8065 2289

## **5.2. The Stop the Violence movement in Denmark An example for a peer led youth initiative**

The name of the project is *Stop Volden* (in English “Stop The Violence”). The choice of the name was inspired by the American Stop The Violence movement and by our desire to stop the increasing violence in our country with the help of the Danish youth.

In the autumn of 1993 five young people in Copenhagen got together to make an effort to change people’s carelessness towards the growing incidents of brutal violence especially among the teenagers. We had all noticed how increasingly violent the city of Copenhagen had become. Therefore we decided to make a common effort to convince our youth that violence was not the answer.

### **The start**

After a common friend was stabbed 6 times and almost lost his life we decided to start preparing a concert against violence. Soon after that there was another stabbing again amongst vary young teenagers, and this time the victim died. After that we released a notice in the press and soon became popular all over the country as the “teenagers” called “Stop The Violence”.

### **Target group and place**

The target group of the project was youth in Denmark, i.e. people aged 12-25. Young people living in major cities and urban areas where chances for success in life are usually lower than in the countryside. After a while we discovered that it was not enough just to address the youth. We had to work with those who surrounded young people: parents, school teachers, youth club workers, police, friends, etc. Only after raising the awareness of that “package” of people we could really get the results.

The project covers the whole territory of Denmark - at youth clubs, primary schools, high schools, at music festivals and concerts, etc.

We have access to young people in various ways. After our first concert, 1500 people had the opportunity to join our movement by sending out a special postcard with their name, address, age, etc. We found out that cultural events such as concerts were an effective means to show our concern and to indicate our common problems as young people be it Pakistani, Moroccan or Danish and whatever our favourite type of music was. Another way of getting access to the youth was through institutions. We started receiving invitations from schools to attend meetings and soon afterwards we discovered that we would be much more successful if we spoke directly to the people. So we started to give lectures around the country. After the press released information about our lectures, the demand for them rapidly increased.

## **Main content of the project**

Our project is basically about the fight against violence as a process of understanding of its nature and of the social conditions which induce it. We had learned that violence, racism, anti-semitism and drug abuse among the youth are often a cry to the surrounding world: a call for recognition or a way to find/establish an identity, or an attempt to demonstrate a position. We did not believe that anyone can become violent simply because he/she likes it. There is much more to it, a logic which may not make sense to the established society but is of a very central importance to youth.

## **Outline of the methodology and description of one particular session**

We never prepare ourselves before a session, we follow the natural course of the discussions. Sometimes there was a particular subject everybody wanted to talk about, the subject depended on the place. We did not have all the answers to people's queries but we had the trust in youth and the will to talk about everything that worried them. We mainly talked about things we had experienced and which they were very likely to come across in the future.

*We did not tell young people how to live their lives.* We did not claim that we knew better what was good for them. That would remind them too much of our parents' generations' way of thinking and would make us seem part of the "establishment" which could result in the loss of young people's credit for us.

We ask the young people to learn from our experiences without having to live through them and learn the hard way we did. Since we're a couple of years older and normally more experienced than our audience we try to explain them that they were probably going to end up with more or less the same ideas.

Nevertheless, we had three principles that we asked the youth to respect:

- We are against all kinds of violence (physical as well as psychological)
- We deny all forms of racism (there has to be room for all of us)
- We say no to drugs

Here is one particular session. which takes approximately half an hour, or sometimes more.

We were asked if we could visit that school because it had a problem with a group of boys harassing the other students.

Everybody in our original group had a different background. Dany and Ronni are brothers, half Danish and half Israeli. They lived with their mother who was working most of the time. They were living in an area of Copenhagen which was loaded with crime, alcohol & drug abusers and a very high unemployment rate. Dany and Ronni

didn't have anyone to keep an eye on them, so they ended up trying to do a lot of things that made them what they are today.

Both of them, however, got out of the criminal environment before it was too late. They had already learned the hard way that they were heading down the wrong path of life. That awareness came mainly as they witnessed the fate of some of their closest friends.

I am 20 years old, my parents are from Morocco. I have five sisters and three brothers and it was hard to live altogether and to establish a personal identity. We were living at the heart of Copenhagen, at a place called Vesterbro. It was much like the place where Dany and Ronni grew up, just add prostitution and drug problems. This place had everything for the adults but nothing for the kids apart from the school. My brother had problems as many sons of foreign workers do he had been involved with crime which brought much pain to our parents. The girls were struggling for something forbidden to them either by their sex or by the religion (Muslim).

All my sisters have one way or another fought for the right to choose in their own lives which is not easy to do when your parents have in one way or another already decided your future. The only reason being that you are a female and have to be protected.

My parents used to say *"The shame a girl can bring to a family is ten times worse than a boy is capable of"*.

Back to the session now.

The main problem was getting through the five "rotten apples" in the school. They were bringing weapons in school. The teachers talked first to the youngsters, then to the parents (which actually made things worse).

We didn't know how to handle the situation because we didn't have an idea why they were behaving this way. That day we were three of us (two boys and a girl). We entered the room where the session was going to take place and found all 7th, 8th and 9th grade students in the same room. We first looked at the faces in front of us and tried to evaluate the young people from their appearances and mainly from their facial *expressions (the eyes)*.

The first thing we noticed was the silence during our speeches. Not that they didn't have things to say but they were somehow absorbing what we were saying before starting their own "session". Everybody had the opportunity to speak. After a while we started talking about the situation in their school and we noticed that only a few mentioned the five trouble-makers of the school.

It's easy to point out at somebody and accuse them and punish them. But then for sure the problem would come back again. So we tried to find solution which was fair for all.

We asked the trouble-makers to explain their reasons for doing these things which they chose to do after the session finished, when we were alone.

It turned out that they wanted something else to do besides the school, because that was not enough to fill their lives. They wanted something exciting and kept mentioning the word RESPECT. They didn't have positive means to assert themselves and resorted to the easy way of "revolt". For them it was a sign of respect when people moved aside after seeing them coming down the street. We did our best to convince them that what they were taking for respect was fear and that it was very easy to scare people. At the end we invited them to visit our offices and see if they could help in our work.

One of the things that made them listen carefully was our approach to sometimes present in a funny way serious things. The effect of exaggerating certain serious things and making people laugh is often stronger and the message more easily accepted than after a sombre and gloomy speech in front of a young audience.

### **The best and the worst moments of the project The main successes and failures**

Several times we felt we were almost incapable of handling the situation because we were entering new fields. Office work and administration of Stop the Violence gave us a hard time - economic issues, the legal rules around our initiatives, mailing to 7000 people every month, arranging concerts, etc.

Everything is still completely new for us and we try to get as much help as possible but sometimes we feel like before a nervous breakdown. Though it usually only lasts a while we feel a collective mental strain particularly out of lack of support. But then we look back and realise that no matter how hard it was and how long it took as long as the result is worth the effort, and the people it was made for are satisfied, we are satisfied too.

We felt happy after a session when we could feel and see that we made a difference by listening or talking to the youth who were at the session. Sometimes girls would come up to me after a session and compliment my work. They would say that it has been great because it is so unusual to have people of almost the same age talking to students. I know one thing for sure from my time in the public school - I have never experienced young-to-young dialogue. Instead we had police, dentists, etc. to tell us what not to do. There was only one time when someone with AIDS came to speak to us and we learned something that the person had lived through, their true personal story.

We also remember with joy the moments when we were given either an award or another sign of appreciation of our work.

### **Training for the peer-teams and/or their coaches?**

When the project got more acknowledgement from outside we decided to let schools who had pupils interested in helping other young people give an extra hand. After a while we discovered that it was not easy to integrate newcomers every week or

month. We had the peers accompany us at our sessions and meetings so they could get an idea about our work. Most of them learned a couple of things, others got a little taste of it. At the end we decided to have one responsible person for every five peers at the office which helped us to relieve the stress.

### **The results and the impact of the project**

The project is still going on so I can only describe the results we have so far. A folder entitled "Life is too short for violence" was distributed to 40 000 pupils all over Denmark. The folder was produced with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

*Stop The Violence* has more than 7000 members, most of them young people between 12 and 18. We have produced a record of talented young musicians who had never had the chance to be recorded. The youngest of them was 13 and the oldest 25.

The record was released with the help of the Ministry of Culture.

"*Stop The Violence*" has held five concerts with musicians from France, U.S., Denmark. All of them have been successful.

We invited the famous photographer Jacob Holdt to show his pictures from America - a dream land for many young people. The pictures revealed the poverty, racism, drugs and violence in American cities.

We have been out to 250 schools and clubs to talk about racism, violence, hope and all sorts of other subjects. We have participated in three different books about the young and the problems of the teenagers.

For further information contact:

Foreningen Stop Volden  
Norre Volgade 23, 1 Floor  
DK - 1358 Copenhagen K.  
Denmark  
Tel + 45 3313 5222  
Fax + 45 3313 5202

### **5.3. ' Building Bridges ' in Sheffield/UK A peer group education programme of a non-governmental organisation**

The National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) England, is a registered charity and affiliated to NCBI International.

#### **Target group and place of the project**

Young people between the ages of 15 and 26 years who were drawn from youth clubs in Sheffield area took part in the programme. They come from a diverse range of background like Jewish, Christian and Muslim; Afro-Caribbean, Asian, Pakistani, white English and black English; disabled and able-bodied; lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual; employed, unemployed and students. They were at that time all voluntary or part-time paid youth workers, or young people using youth work provision.

The young people who take up trainer's role could take advantage of youth work provision. It took place in Sheffield, at a residential centre.

NCBI gained access to the young people through the youth service and youth organisations.

#### **The start**

The group were already meeting as part of a Youth Involvement Group and they identified prejudice reduction and diversity work as something they wanted to take on. NCBI were contacted by the youth worker involved because of our good reputation in this field of work.

#### **Main content of the project**

The main content of the project was to welcome diversity; for participants to reach for pride in their own identities; understand diversity issues; make effective interventions to prejudice and discrimination; and to train other young people in prejudice reduction methods.

#### **Outline of the methodology and description of one particular session**

We wanted to bring ideas to every city, town, campus and organisation. Our staff and associates helped in launching Local Associations in different communities.

We led either introductory one-day Prejudice Reduction workshops or 3-day train-the-trainer workshops teaching the people (a minimum 15 including leaders from community groups, schools, religious groups, local governments, police, private and public sectors) to lead the NCBI Prejudice Reduction workshop and Conflict Resolution models.

We provided further assistance and training to local groups and National Associates (local community leaders designed for connection with NCBI).

NCBI methodology is different from that employed by many others in this field of work. It is upbeat, fun and practical. It offers specific and concrete skills which are immediate, practical and adaptable. Guilt and blame are counter-productive and immobilising and as such form no part of the content. Participants are encouraged to reflect on current practice, to increase their own personal effectiveness and to plan future action and strategies. At a recent workshop for a group of young women hearing each others stories of racial, religious and ethnic prejudices had them moved and making connections with the way they have themselves been hurt, and emerging with new understandings and a more sophisticated of how all their experiences are connected.

### **The best and the worst moments of the project The main successes and failures**

The main success has been twofold. Firstly, each participant has given feedback that their understanding of diversity issues, prejudice and discrimination have been radically altered, their behaviour and ability to handle situations has dramatically changed. Secondly, many of the participants have gone out and used what they have learned with other young people. The main failure has been that we have not had the financial resource for the key trainer to remain involved to offer an on going support, supervision and fresh training input required for the group to continue.

### **Training for peer-teams and/or their coaches?**

The project itself was specifically about providing training for peer-teams.

### **Financial and material resources**

Financial resource came from the YIP programme, NCBI England, and Sheffield Area Youth Association. Input and training for the key trainer came from NCBI International.

### **Results and the impact of the project**

The project made a good impact on the young people who were directly involved in the project itself, and with the young people the peer-teams have gone on to work with.

#### *For further information contact:*

Building Bridges Against Prejudice  
National Coalition Building Institute  
75 Colby Road  
Leicester LE4 8LG  
UK  
Tel + 44 533 695910  
Fax + 44 533 695910

#### **5.4. THE GUARDIAN ANGELS**

##### **Peer group action in big cities**

The initiators of the project were young men and women in England who contacted the Guardian Angels organisation in New York City, where the movement was founded in 1979. People involved as founder members were in England: Dave Edmonds, Tom Hibberd and Colin Hatcher; and from New York: Collins Pompey, Sebastian Metz, Robert Powell and Guardian Angels Founder Curtis Sliwa. I (Colin Hatcher) was one of the people from London who contacted the NYC group, and I was also one of the first members to join in January 1989 when the project was set up in London.

##### **The start**

Throughout 1988 the streets of London like many large towns and cities were becoming more and more violent. Young people (men and women) were getting involved in street fighting. The major problem was racial hatred and intolerance. So there were racially segregated street gangs of Black youth, White youth and Asian youth. Particularly dangerous were the large street gangs of white football hooligans and racists who were involved in some terrible acts of violence during that year. They cruised the underground on Saturday nights, looking for trouble, they usually found it.

Another development during 1988 was the emergence of "Steamer" gangs, where a group of 10 or more youngsters, armed with knives, boarded underground trains and, between stops, would rob ("mug") all the passengers. Because the robberies needed to be carried out very quickly any resistance from victims was met with extreme violence. The targets for these gangs were often young men and women of the same age group. These were teenage gangs robbing and attacking teenage victims.

Violence against women was not a new thing in 1988 but was certainly increasing, especially on public transport systems, most notably on the underground trains, where the lack of security made it a paradise for rapists, flashers and gropers. Increasingly women, especially teenage women were becoming reluctant to travel alone at night.

Growing unemployment, lack of opportunity and boredom drew many kids into violent lifestyles and criminal behaviour during this time. For many kids crime was the only way to make money. The role models for a growing number of youth (symbolised by money, success, status) were the drug dealers and gangsters on the street corner. And many youngsters aspired to that lifestyle. A whole climate of intolerance, hatred and violence was growing. And also indifference. Passengers on trains sat and watched while gangs beat up victims, and no-one did anything.

But many young people were distressed by what was happening on the streets of London. They were unhappy with the situation, with the way kids were divided and

with the way that fear and hatred and violence were making Saturday nights more and more dangerous.

London is like every other big city. On Saturday nights many go out on the town and have a good time. Then everyone tries to get home, not everyone makes it home. Some end up in jail and some end up in hospital. And the most dangerous age to be (the most at risk) are young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25. Myself and my friends had all suffered this violence - street fighting, racial violence, muggings or sexual attacks.

So we were looking for some way to do something. You know how it is. Most people watch TV or read the newspapers, and say "Oh how terrible the world is!" but they don't DO anything. We wanted to DO something to make our city safe and to unite the youth, especially against racial hatred and violence. Since the youth are the future.

So having known about the Guardian Angels for a long time and admiring the way they had brought the youth together in New York City we contacted them and asked if they would come to England and teach us how to be Guardian Angels too. They said yes, the instructors came to England from New York and set up a training programme.

### **Target group**

The project started in January 1989 based in Kings Cross, London - an area notorious for violence, drugs, prostitution and a place where young kids who ran away from home often ended up. The other place where we trained was Leytonstone in East London, very near to West Ham United football ground, an area with a large minority Asian population and a lot of racial violence.

The target group of the project was the youth of the city - all of them! We aimed to bring together young men and women of all races, all religions, all cultures and subcultures (i.e. skinheads **and** B-boys or Hip Hoppers), all abilities and all political opinions (racists of other people with hatred and intolerance were not welcomed) many people came down and changed their views through contact with our group.

We reached the youth of the city in a very direct way. The Guardian Angels basically walk the streets and travel the trains and we help people get home safely. When we run our "safety patrols" as we call them, we wear an identifying uniform, which consists of a red beret and a white T-shirt with the symbol of our organisation printed on it in red (we call it our "colours"). Apart from the red beret and the T-shirt, everybody can dress however they want, and express themselves through the way they look. This meant that wherever we walked in London, young men and women saw us and wanted to talk with us. When we walk the streets we make it our business to talk to everyone we meet. And we also carry information leaflets about our group, which invite everyone to join us and participate.

In addition to talking with youth on the streets, in the most dangerous and violent areas, we also received media coverage from TV, radio and newspapers. Since our initiative was the first time anyone had tried this in England. Some people said "*This*

*won't work in England – it's an American thing*” but the New York City Angels reassured us – *“This is a universal idea addressing a universal problem”* they pointed out to us. After all, they observed: when crack cocaine and its associated American style gang violence came to England, no-one said *“This won't work here because this is England.”*

### **Main content of the project**

The purpose of the Guardian Angels in every city where we work is twofold. Firstly it is our aim to prevent violent street crime by being a visual and if necessary physical deterrent. This means that when we are out on the streets, if we see violence, we will go in between the people fighting and we will try to stop the violence. We put our own bodies between the criminals and the victims. The group is anti-violence and carries no weapons. But we will get physical if we have to. The streets are tough and so are we. But we follow the laws of self defence in whatever country we work.

We are activists, protecting the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights 1948, especially article 3 which states that: *“All people have the right to life, liberty and security of person”*.

Our second, and equally important aim is to provide real life walking talking role models for young people. By showing them members of their own peer group who come from the same backgrounds and have the same problems, but who are solving them in a constructive and non violent way. The aim is to attract young people away from violence into positive activities. And we make this activity exciting!

*‘In this world a few good guys stay good and a few bad guys stay bad’*. But the vast majority are caught in the middle, and make choices, especially during teenage years. Many young people could go either way depending on what is available. The Guardian Angels was established for these kind of people - it was set up BY these kind of people. Many of our members are ex gang members and trouble-makers, who have found a positive expression for their energy.

Curtis Sliwa the founder of the group in New York City found a way to create a group with all the attractions of a gang – “colours”, a look, a language, an attitude - but without the negative.

New members of the group train for three months before graduation. During this time they are given the opportunity to learn for free some really effective urban survival skills.

In addition new members walk out on the streets straight away and start learning how to communicate, to protect and to help other people. The sense of empowerment is great. We believe that young people join gangs for love and respect, friendship and status, and especially in order to feel powerful. We have been successful in the Guardian Angels in providing that powerful feeling to young men and women who have previously only experienced it in criminal activities.

Guardian Angels hang out on the streets and squares, and we look cool - and we are seen by youth as positive role models. Young men and women want to be like us.

And we look just like them, so people see us and think "I could be like that!", because it's not just males, or just Black guys, or just big strong guys. Young people are attracted by the way we look, by our sense of purpose, and because they can see that we are having a good time. The sense of danger and risk which accompanies the group is also attractive to youth. We are like real life comic book superheroes and superheroines. The martial arts features strongly in our training programme and in our philosophy.

### **Description of a training session**

I will here briefly describe a typical training session, and a typical safety patrol on a Saturday night:

A group of 20 or so young people have met in an upstairs room of a youth centre in Kings Cross, London. The group is multiracial. The chief instructor today is, surprisingly, a young Indian woman, who goes by the street name "Judge". The other instructors are a stocky Black guy who calls himself "Mr X" and a white guy called "Gabriel". The training group consists of a mixture of experienced Guardian Angels and relatively new trainees. New and inexperienced people are straightaway partnered up with the more experienced ones. Most of the trainees are wearing Guardian Angel T-shirts and red berets. The experienced graduates wear a shirt that reads "Guardian Angels Safety Patrol". Trainees who have been on patrol but have not yet graduated, wear a T-shirt that reads "I Support the Guardian Angels".

Judge introduces herself and welcomes the 2 new people. This is a feature of the whole training - despite the intensity and physical violence of a lot of the training, the Angels certainly look after each other very well. The class begins with a close quarter combat drill called "Sticky Elbows Defensive Wall Drill". This long title describes a simple drill which gets everyone warm and develops close range sensitivity. It also teaches everyone to protect their head from attack.

Next in the class come wrestling and grappling work. Partners fight on the ground, trying to hold each other down. After the combat section comes role-playing. Some of the experienced angels take off their berets and T-shirts, and become the bad guys, or "mutants" as the angels call them. A "patrol" of 6 angels leave the room. Then as they enter the room as if on patrol, they are presented with a problem to solve - it could be two people fighting, it could be an encounter with a gang, or it could be a man harassing a woman. Whatever it is the patrol tries to deal with it - calming the situation down, and using minimum force, and providing first aid if necessary.

*"Angels train in first aid" says Judge. "Now to a lot of people first aid is not cool - macho guys think it's something that weak people do, or sexist guys say it's for girls. In the Angels first aid is cool, just like the medics in a war in the army are cool - they are heroes. And so are we. And then later when you use it on the street and it works, and everyone is thanking you - especially if you save a life, which we have done many times - the feeling is incredible. You're high for days."*

Sometimes the patrol screws up the role-play - and things go wrong. *“But that’s the whole point of training”* Judge points out. *“You learn by mistakes, and this is a safe environment in which to learn”*.

*“You need to draw the line earlier”* Judge points out, and she leads the class into a whole series of training drills called appropriately *“Drawing the Line, or DTL”*, which teach Angels when to stop negotiating and when to start fighting, and what to do in between. *“It’s the mutants’ choice”* Judge observes. *“We don’t want to fight, but if we are pushed too far, than the Angel will take the mutant down”*.

All around us “mutants” are “Crossing the Line” and are being wrestled down to the ground by “Angels”. The techniques are streetstyle - hair pulling for example is permitted, and everyone has to watch out for the mutants’ teeth. *“On the street there are no rules”* comments Mr X. *“In a street fight people will bite each other, gouge, kick, scratch - do anything to win. Angels are prepared for anything. The streets are rough and so are we - but we have hearts of gold. We use minimum force to prevent an attack continuing. But don’t be fooled - we are peacemakers - not pacifists”*.

You can see why the training is so popular. Even small members can take the bad guys down and out. Judge says one of the main purposes of the training is to create and develop what the Angels call “Warrior Spirit”.

Training finishes with knuckle push-up - more warrior spirit training, according to Judge, and then the group “raps”. Everyone introduces themselves, comments on the training and asks any questions they might have.

*“Every angel has an angel name - a street name”* Judge answers. *“It’s part of our tradition that every member chooses a “tag”. Your street name is like an alter ego. You put it on with your colours. In your day to day life you may not have so much courage, but when you put on your colours to patrol, you become an Angel, and the name comes with that. Our members get inspiration from it. It’s all part of our culture”*.

## **Patrolling**

I meet the patrol at their HQ in a dark side street of Kings Cross. It’s 19.30 hrs. HQ is a basement office, decorated with Angel photos and articles. The patrol group is multiracial and there are men and women present. The average age is about 18 years old. *“We dress for combat, comfort and style, in that order”* explains Michael “Mr X” Quinn, one of the patrol leaders for tonight. I ask about the uniform – *“The uniform is just the red beret and the T-shirt - we call that the colours”* Mr X answers. *“Apart from that people can dress how ever they want. We encourage diversity in our group - it develops tolerance.”*

There are 18 Guardian Angels present. Mr X calls us all to order and the room becomes silent and expectant. Mr X calls the patrols aloud, indicating which angel is assigned to which patrol. Each patrol has a name. Tonight London will see “Justice Machine” (led by Dominie “Judge” Kitaj).

Before we leave everyone is searched out of the HQ. I ask Mr X why. *"We are checking each other to make sure that no-one is carrying weapons or drugs"* he explains. *"Out on the situations Guardian Angels rely on our own bodies and each other for protection"*.

The patrols split up. "Justice Machine" heads for the subway, heading for an area in east London called Stratford where there had been a recent rape on the station platform. The station manager there is a great supporter of the angels. "Rapture" walks into the downtown area of London's West End, where there are a lot of clubs and a lot of people. They will be patrolling an area where a local gang sell crack and other drugs to the tourists.

'Department of Correction' heads up to the area around Kings Cross station. 2 months ago a 15 year old white boy was stabbed and killed by a gang of 6 Asian boys - some of the killers were 13 years old. *"The racial hatred and violence has been going on for a long time"* explains Judge. *"The murder happened right on our doorstep. This is our neighbourhood and we want to do something about it."*

The angels walk down Drummond Street, a street full of Asian shops and restaurants. Half way down the streets there is a big posse of Asian boys, just hanging out, bored, with nothing to do. Most of the youth clubs in this area are closed because there is no money available to pay staff to run them. The Asian youth are also nervous. Everyone is still waiting for the inevitable revenge attacks by the local White street gangs. Here in Drummond Street Asians are relatively safe.

The Angels stop to chat, shake hands and distribute information leaflets. They are respected by the Asian boys, who have a lot to say about the situation. The Angels move away from the Asian area and cross into the White gang's turf. The Asian posse said that they were too scared to walk these streets, but the Angels seem to be able to walk anywhere. I ask Judge why.

*"Firstly" she answers, "we are multiracial. That means that in an area of racial tension, we are a calming influence simply by our physical presence. The other reason is that street gangs know that we are neutral in any conflict. We try not to take sides. We are against violence, but we are not "against" particular people. If we see an Asian gang beating up a white boy we'll do the same thing as if we see a white gang beating up an Asian boy. We'll stop the violence. And they all know it. Another reason that we are respected is that everyone knows that we carry no weapons. And the last reason youth look up to us is that we're not getting paid for this – we're volunteers. People respect that commitment."*

Outside a pub the patrol meets a posse of white boys. They, like the Asian boys, are hanging out and are bored. They are also just waiting for something to happen. Again the angels shake hands and "rap" (as they call it).

*"You know" says Judge to two of the boys, "You're saying exactly the same things to me as some Asian guys over in Drummond Street. They think that you started it, and you think that they started it. They hate the cops and think the cops side with you, and you hate the cops and think the cops side with the Asians. You're sitting out here bored, and they're sitting out over there just as bored. Why don't you guys get*

*together and have a party?" A police van rolls by. The police don't walk the streets here. They patrol in riot vehicles. They aren't very popular among the youth." See those guys over there" says Falcon, pointing to some rough looking young guys. "We arrested them a few weeks ago. They were beating up and robbing a 65 year old man. There was a fight. We won. We arrested them and called the Police".*

The night remains tense but calm. "That's a good night for us" says Falcon. "A good night for the Guardian Angels is when nothing happens." We return to base, and meet up with the other patrols. Everybody is excited as they take off their colours and wind down. As we leave for home the sun is rising. I ask Judge one last question. Why do they do it, since it is all volunteer work, and none of them are paid?

*"Well, we all believe that everybody has the right to go out and have a good time on a Saturday night without being threatened, attacked or mugged, and believe that every person has a responsibility to protect that right, not just to say it, but to do something to make it happen. We want to make our city a safer place to live in. Many of us have been attacked on the streets, and when it happened there was no-one there who would help us. We don't want what happened to us to happen to anyone else."*

### **The best and worst moments of the project**

#### **The main successes and failures**

The main success of our group has been to not only set up in London, but to expand across Europe. To date we have 2 groups in England (London and Manchester), 3 groups in Sweden (Stockholm, Malmo and Gothenburg), and 2 groups in Germany (Berlin and Hamburg). In Berlin the group has played an important role in countering the neo Nazi movement among young white guys, bringing together White Germans, Turkish youth, Africans, German Jews and other minorities into one group. We have also visited Amsterdam, Paris, Milan, Copenhagen, Liverpool and Moscow. In 1995 we will hopefully be setting up groups in Milan, Copenhagen and Moscow.

The main failure of the group is that we are still small when compared to the population of 16-25 year olds in our cities. We are always seeking new ways to grow. Also, expansion needs money, and we have constant difficulty in paying phone bills, buying new T-shirts etc.

I think the best moment in the history of our project has been the graduation day of 50 Guardian Angels in Berlin in June 1993. Because there are such problems in Berlin of racial hatred and violence we felt the group's work was so important there. I can think of 2 worst moments:

Firstly I remember in 1991 trying to save a man's life, he had had a heart attack at a station, and I was doing CPR (resuscitation), he died. The second worst moment came in Malmo, Sweden where we were patrolling during the European Football riots. Our patrols saw and were caught up in such terrible violence that night, although we saved a lot of people there was very little we could do to stop the violence. There were several hundred football hooligans on the loose with weapons, and the police had pulled out of the area. Many of our members there were patrolling for the first time. It was a nasty baptism of fire.

## **Training for the work**

Training is not only given to new members we encourage all members to train to become leaders. Leadership and good life skills are important to the group.

## **The results and the impact of the project**

We know we have changed the face of many of Europe's cities. We have offered youth a chance to do something positive. To date we have probably had several thousand young people training with us, working to stop the violence in the cities. The groups not only patrol the streets we have speaking engagements in schools and youth centres where we talk realistically about violence. We offer free self defence courses for women, and offer 'street smart' courses for young kids (6 to 14 year olds). Finally we are involved in food distribution for homeless people. We know we have made a difference.

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## **5.5. RFSL; School information about homosexuality (Skolinformations) Peer group education by a non-governmental organisation in Sweden**

The Swedish Federation for Gay/Lesbian Rights (Riksforbundet for Sexuellt Likaberattigande, RFSL) recruited young members to carry out the information part and a co-ordinator.

### **The start**

RFSL felt there was a need for the already existing information about homosexuality, to be complemented since the literature was often of poor quality and teachers often lacked sufficient knowledge to give appropriate information.

### **Target group**

The main target group were young students between the age of fourteen to eighteen. (There are however exceptions such as university students, school staff and other groups working with young people.)

### **Place of the project**

At present, information is concentrated to the main cities in Sweden but RFSL strives to cover other areas as well, most sessions take place in schools. Sometimes students come to the RFSL premises. Occasionally sessions take place in youth centres or in the premises of youth clubs/organisations.

### **Access to the target group**

Initially RFSL offered their services directly to schools and spread information through other institutions who also have contact with schools. At present schools contact RFSL for information, all "marketing" and bookings are made by the co-ordinator.

### **Outline of the methodology and description of one particular session**

Information is often given during respective schools thematic working days or weeks when students learn about and discuss love, sex, relationships and contraceptives. Informants work in pairs; one male and one female. The duration of the sessions vary between 40 to 80 minutes per group. Ideally the groups are no larger than 30 people. An introduction is given for 10 to 20 minutes (depending on the amount of time available ). At this point a very short introduction to RFSL is made and a brief presentation of the informants. Some terms and expressions are explained and a very brief description of the general situation for 'queers' is made (a few words about the legal situation, that many queers choose to conceal their sexual orientation, the situation for 'queers' from an international and historical perspective.

After the introduction part many schools prefer to split the group into two groups; one male and one female. If this is the case, the informants take one group each and

switch groups after half of the remaining time in order to allow both groups to meet a male and a female informant. Regardless whether the group is split or not the floor is now opened for questions and general discussion. The students are allowed to ask general and personal questions. Rather than restricting the questions the informants will explain to the group that a question is too personal to answer. Generally, most questions are answered. According to clients wishes and needs, the information can be altered to focus more on youth issues, women's issues, men's issues, immigrant's issues, HIV/AIDS etc. Typical questions are: *"What did your parents and friends say when you told them you are gay?"*, *"How do you have sex?"*, *"How do other people treat you when they find out you are gay?"*, *"What if you want to have children?"*, *"Are you not afraid of AIDS?"*

### **The best and worst moments of the project**

The best moments are when the informants have been able to "sow thought seeds" for the students to reflect upon and when 'queer' students have found encouragement in the information to "come out" and get in touch with other 'queer' youth. The worst moments are when faced with bigot teachers who insist on theoretical discussions which students cannot follow. (These teachers are often asked to leave the session.) Facing students with fascist and religious fanatical ideas is never pleasant either.

### **Training of informants**

All informants are given training this takes place during three evening sessions and a full weekend and seeks to give the future informants knowledge about homosexuality, young people in general, 'queer' history and information methodology. When this part of the training is completed, the informants accompany experienced informants to schools on at least three different occasions before they go out on their own. Follow - up meetings are held on a regular basis and often in connection with a guest speaker on a relevant topic.

### **Results and impact**

As the project aims at giving information it is very difficult to evaluate the results and impact. The RFSL however believes this is one way to demystify homosexuality and a contribution in the struggle against prejudice and intolerance.

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# Section 6

## Step by Step How to start a peer group education programme

This section is meant to be a tool for people to use as a pointer in implementing a programme of peer group education. As part of any programme initial training should be provided to deepen the awareness about issues like stereotypes, prejudice, human rights and interdependence. In Sections 8 and 9 you will find methods for training including a number of case studies on how to implement a peer group education programme according to the specific needs of your field of work.

The following steps are put in form of questions that should be raised during the preparation and implementation process of the programme. On page 47 we have included a summary of the main parts in a checklist.

### 6.1. Preparation and designing the programme

**What are the aims and objectives of the programme?  
What would you like to achieve with it?**

**What are the issues you wish to tackle?  
Have you clearly limited the area of issues to a realistic work load?**

**Who is the target group of your programme?  
(see also 2. Recruitment)**

**Where will the project take place? How will the peer educators get access?**

This should include physical access, via public transport or through car sharing or minibus services to ensure that programmes are open to young people from all geographical areas whether that be in a rural or urban community. Often the expenses of travel can be a barrier to some young people who can't rely on parents who own cars or are able to transport young people.

**What is the methodology of your programme and which working methods are suitable to reach the aims and the target group?**

**What is demanded of the trainers and peer educators?  
How much time and energy will they have to invest in the programme?**

**What training materials will you need for the programme?**

Efforts should be made to eliminate training materials and teaching strategies that rely solely on the written word or didactic teaching methods. You may have to develop training materials for specific groups. Also in the contact with parents communication should go beyond written leaflets.

**What financial resources will you require to implement your programme?**

An important consideration for any programme should be the resources required, whether they be for training activities, for transport or expenses, publicity materials, meeting places etc.. Funding can bring with it the potential for developing exciting and innovative work. Financial limitations shouldn't limit the creativity to develop low-cost and highly effective activities and de-centralised structures. Additional funding might be easier to find once the programme is known and accepted. It is important to look for support from different sources. For example established private funding, using free materials and services, public funding, etc. Sponsorship should only be accepted if the interests of the sponsor will not interfere with the aims of the project.

## **6.2. Recruitment**

**What should be the profile of the peer educators?**

The profile of the peer educators should not be adult defined. It is suggested that any selection process be guided by a 'person specification' even if very general (e.g. the young person should be aged 16-18, and have good communication skills and a broad understanding of the issues). Academic achievement and adult defined status may omit those who's status is based on personal popularity or athletic achievement. By incorporating disenfranchised youth particular target groups of young people and issues, can be more effectively reached and addressed. Define the age group based on target group, decisions about age group will have to be balanced with the topics or issues being discussed. For some issues the target age group may need to be very precise, for example work with students (18 to 20 years) or work with younger teenagers (14 to 16 years). The basic rule is, however, that peer educators should be close in age to the target group.

**How should the team of peer educators be composed?**

The composition of the group should respect male/female balance, ethnic mix, disability, religion, sexual orientation. Young people may be recruited from a variety of settings to represent a particular target group. It is vital that the young people in the team can relate to the young people of the target group. Personal experiences and knowledge in questions like tolerance and intolerance build the basis for the communication with the target group.

## What do the 'peer educators' get out of it?

In the phase of setting up a peer educators team, interested young people should have information about what they will gain from being involved in the programme. This could be done by distributing leaflets with positive statements of young people formerly involved in peer group projects or by inviting those young people for a discussion.

*Potential arguments that might motivate young people to get involved in a project:*

- you can have a voice in creating a society that is more tolerant
- you can help to solve problems that affect you
- you will become more confident and assertive
- you will learn how to speak to a public
- you can improve your communication skills
- you'll become a positive community role model for other young people
- you will develop your leadership potential
- you get to relate to young people on your own level
- you get to make new friends.
- you can let people in power know your point of view.
- you can have fun!

## Having an agreement?

You might consider having a contract or agreement with the peer educators, where they sign to commit themselves for the duration of the project. It may be that a peer group education project takes place within a school term or 'education years' so that young people can commit themselves for particular periods. An agreement can also include the name, address, telephone number of a supportive contact person and times when he or she can be contacted (see page 45).

## Incentives - To pay or not to pay?

To pay or not to pay? When building a team of group peer educators, incentives may be important-from free food, seminars, residential weekends, media exposure, academic credits or money. For some young people volunteering may not be an option because of economic pressure to earn money for themselves or the family. An hourly wage could make it financially possible for young people to commit their time to peer group education programmes. Incentives can take many forms; either as payment for time and expenses or for acknowledgement of the learning experience, some education authorities are able to give credits for learning. Payment is a very sensitive question and should be considered carefully in discussion with every one involved in the project. The basic rule is, however, that all steps should be taken, that young people's involvement **does not cost them money**.

### **6.3. Peer Group Leaders or Coaches**

#### **Who helps with the training?**

Working through an appropriate training co-ordinator may be important for some programmes. The person responsible for training, supporting and recruiting the peer group should have an understanding of young people, i.e. as a youth or community worker or representative of a youth organisation or agency. For many peer group education projects this is planned by an individual who is ultimately responsible for the programme. He/she should have a clear understanding of potential peer educators, their training and support needs. Most important this person needs to have a sound belief in the potential of young people. This leader or coach has a role which is to support, to motivate, to initiate and to assist the young people, when necessary. Eventually the leader or coach should withdraw from his/her role and give over the leadership entirely to the young people. (See also Section 7: 10 points for a coach)

### **6.4. Support systems for peer group educators**

#### **Which support system will you require?**

Peer educators may be dealing with difficult, sensitive and sometimes controversial subjects and situations which can put added pressures on the young person both in practical terms and emotionally especially with a programme dealing with racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of intolerance. Dealing with situations and incidents which may be challenging and difficult can put pressure on young people. Practical problems like other commitments and difficulties with transport can also bring added pressure. Building support structures before embarking on a peer group education programme is especially important. Support can be built into the agreement or contract. Support can be offered in a number of ways, through consultation meetings and regular discussion groups, less formal conversation on the telephone after a difficult session, constructive feedback after sessions or training courses. Parents, teachers and other persons of confidence can be another useful support structure; keeping them informed will help encourage young people's involvement.

<p><b>SUPPORT AGREEMENT</b></p> <p>Name of peer group educator.....</p> <p>Address .....</p> <p>Meetings are held at .....</p> <p>on .....</p> <p>The co-ordinator of the programme is.....</p> <p>They are based at .....</p> <p>Their telephone number is.....</p> <p>Your named support person is .....</p> <p>She/He can help you with practical problems (transport childcare etc.) or emotional advice, support Their telephone number is.....</p> <p>You can contact them between and .....</p> <p>Their address is .....</p> <p>Peer Educator, Support Person and Parent/Guardian can be given a copy of this Support Document</p>
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It may be important for some groups that an adult within the participants setting is identified as being willing to support or help the individuals as, when and if required. This person could be a volunteer, full or part time youth worker.

**6.5. Ownership and Management**

**Who is the boss?**

Young people are the bosses of the project. They will be in control of their activities. A management structure can be implemented to facilitate feed-back and communication, this can be a group made up of people who are offering support, the peer group educators themselves, funders, etc.

**6.6. Review and Evaluation**

**Do we reflect on and evaluate our action?**

Evaluation and review should be an on going process. Peer group trainers and peer educators should be brought together to evaluate

- a) their training
- b) their fieldwork

c) their personal development.

Evaluation should attempt to monitor any increase in knowledge. This can be done by using simple questionnaires before the sessions begin and again at the end or a short review session where basic information like numbers attending, issues raised and problems encountered can be documented. From these evaluations the peer leader should be able to form a developmental plan for their group. Evaluation of young people's own training should also highlight their own personal training needs.

Evaluation should be useful both to the educators themselves and to organisations or individuals involved in the programme they should help to guide the project. As pressures on resources are often limited funders will be keen to see how projects develop. There might be considerable pressure to measure the effects of programmes in a quantitative way, by keeping records of numbers attending, contacts made and resources used some conclusions may be drawn about value for money and cost effectiveness of peer group education.

### **STEP BY STEP CHECKLIST**

Some things to think about

Setting your aims and objectives

Who do you plan to work with and what do you plan to do?

Recruitment

What do they get out of it?

Do you need an agreement or a contract?

What methods will you use? ... Video, Discussion, Role Play, Presentations, Lessons ... etc.

Do you need funding?

Training for the peer group educators

Leaders and Coaches

What is their role?

Support Systems

Power, Ownership and Management ... will the young people be in control?

How will you review, document and evaluate your programme?

Working with the media

## Section 7

### Your project is running - how to coach it?

Racism, anti-semitism, xenophobia, homophobia and other related forms of intolerance are forms of prejudice and discrimination. Dealing with these issues can be a challenge and at the same time a great opportunity for learning and sharing. Dealing with these issues can raise very sensitive and emotional issues. Grief about suffering from discrimination might surface; rage, anger, shame and tears might be shed and shared. Much the same can happen as it does in AIDS-prevention or alcohol-prevention peer group education projects.

For all the participants the peer group education project itself can become a process of learning much about life and about themselves. As in any on-going process it is natural that there will be times of stress and difficulties that might not have not been foreseen at first thought.

They can vary according to:

- to the nature of the project
- to the phase it is going through
- to the subject being dealt with
- to the number of people involved
- to the environment
- to the structure of the peer group
- to leadership among the youth.

In the examples of good practice quoted in this book (section 5) some of the most difficult moments were described by those who contributed.

*The following core problems can be cited (and surely some more may be found):*

- exhaustion
- confrontation with unfamiliar tasks
- pressure of administrative work load
- financial and funding problems
- growth of project into unknown dimensions
- not enough assistance provided
- leadership problems, in-group quarrels, team problems
- gender problems
- dealing with strong emotions in yourself and in others
- need to help and comfort people; limitations to do so
- confrontation with expectations of others
- disturbing influences from outside groups or authorities
- boredom
- risky or dangerous situations
- dealing with the media

## ■ drop-outs

As youth worker, school master or trainer involved in a peer group education project you may be happy and proud to have launched such a project in your environment. You will want the project to become a success. You will want the young people to feel comfortable with it. You want to coach them, but in a very unobtrusive way, leaving the peers to their own devices as much as possible.

### **How do you go about this in a creative way?**

It is useful to bear in mind the starting points of your peer group education project.

*As a coach you will want to empower young people:*

- by encouraging them to identify their goals
- by helping them to make informed choices
- by teaching and practising the necessary skills
- by fostering mutual support, tolerance and emotional healing in the group
- by creating a positive environment for their activities
- by defending their rights
- by assisting them emotionally
- by expressing faith in their capabilities
- by creating structures and systems for decision-making that bring in diverging view-points, heighten perception and lead to effective use of information and experience

*to promote the message against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism:*

- by providing useful materials
- by helping to network some other similar or adjacent projects
- by making yourself more knowledgeable about racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of intolerance
- by learning from the day-to-day experience of young people
- by recruiting a diverse team of youth
- by respecting diversity and diverse needs
- by treating everybody equally

*More practically speaking you might consider the following suggestions:*

## **12 Points for the supportive and non-authoritarian coach**

### **1. General**

Different coaches have different styles. But there are a few key points for coaches:

- They support the team spirit and co-operation.

- They must recognise the skills of the different partners involved and put them in the right positions.

The team will sometimes not act as planned or expected. The coach helps the peers reflect on their experience so they are ready to act better next time. During the practical work, the coach is on the sideline. At practice, the coach plays different roles.

Identify leaders in the group and help them before and between meetings to plan meetings, develop strategy proposals, lead meetings, and anticipate problems. Youth leaders need support and training so that they can lead other youth. Without training and support they risk 'burn out'.

Discuss the establishment of a routine of weekly or bi-weekly meetings where brainstorming, re-considering, re-evaluating can be done in a quiet setting. Set up flip chart or black board where everything that happened can be continuously noted down in an easy way, what worked, what didn't work, what could be improved. Keep findings; "What went well?", "What could be better?" "What needs further discussion/evaluation?" as the barometer of the development of the project and as the basis of group discussions. Always start with a positive feed-back "What went well? What have we/you as the group and you as individuals achieved?" Be prepared not to be needed when you might want to teach something, but be always there when you are needed.

## **2. Expectations and aims. Activism and burn out.**

The coaches cannot achieve the aims themselves. The team will have into work to achieve the aims. The coach should inject realism in the project without breaking idealism.

Burn out is a common result of activism. To prevent this suggest; cherishing each other, taking a rest, bringing in more people, delegating tasks, setting realistic aims, finding enough resources (helpers, money, etc). The topic of your peer group education programme, fighting racism and xenophobia has to be treated seriously. Working on projects and programmes can be fun and rewarding for young people and their coaches.

## **3. Administration and planning**

Assign a person that is ready to assist the peer group with administration. The person should offer regular visiting hours every week which can be used without pressure of other work. Make office space and office equipment available at certain times of the week.

Organise a session with the peer group dealing with planning instruments. Make an exercise how to use annual and weekly planners. Have a 'pro' and 'contra' discussion about 'planned' versus 'spontaneous' action. Ask the group to decide who will be in charge with keeping up the agenda. Discuss what the prospective phases

of the project will be, i.e. for organising a camp, an event, creating educational materials etc.

#### **4. Finances and funding**

Offer a session to the peer group on the topic 'money' and its value in our society. Discuss volunteer and paid work engagements. Discuss what funding means and how funds greatly determine the size of the project. Discuss prospective sponsors.

Use 'role play' to develop skills in convincing a potential sponsor and getting across the importance and uniqueness of the project to him/her. Explain different options of budgeting, i.e. that even without huge funds a great deal can be achieved. Work on methods for drawing up budgets. Help in looking for sponsors and promoters of the campaign.

#### **5. Growth of the project**

Discuss how the project went so far. Until now, can distinctive phases be named?

- What are the implications when a new phase of the project development is reached?
- What needs to be done next?
- Who looks forward to the new challenge, who is a little scared about it? Why?
- How can we support each other? Do we need more people in the project, more participants, or more support from the outside?

#### **6. Leadership problems, team problems**

What do you as coach do when you disagree with the group? How quickly do you show opposition? Which mistakes are learning experiences for the youth? Which ones endanger the project? Are you sure you know better? How can you communicate your information in a way that is not 'adultist' (*"When you're older you'll know that..."* or *"Have you considered what will happen if..."*).

Generally give support to the youth leader and do not allow the leader to be heavily criticised or oppressed. Accept criticism from the group for your work as long as it is not destructive. Ask for respect just as you would be respectful to others.

*Use a variety of educational tools; questionnaires, dilemma boards, newspaper cuttings, etc. for exercises that deal with the following questions:*

- What does leadership mean?
- Who wants to fulfil that role? Why? Who does not want such a role? Why?
- Are there only advantages about being a leader (admiration, power, fulfilment, pride) or can there be disadvantages as well (workload, leading eats up energy, exhaustion, burn-out).

- Can there be alternative leadership models? Shared leadership? Leadership on rotation?
- What is a team? Why are we a team? What are our goals? Why could we be divided, which are the disturbing factors?
- How do we deal with divisions early and openly in a healing way?
- How do we say good-bye to disruptive people?

## 7. Gender problems

*Use educational tools to tackle the following questions:*

- We have launched a project against racism and intolerance. Does racism and intolerance have anything to do with sexism or (vice versa)?
- Racism and intolerance also touches our individual feelings. How do young people in our group feel about their individual identity and about their role in society? How did we, as girls and boys, learn about our life roles in childhood?
- Do girls of different ethnic groups feel differently about their position in society?
- Can we fight discrimination on the outside of our group if there is discrimination within our group?

Consider breaking up the group in a female and male sub-group. Let them first work separately, then together. Let them discuss if such a separation would be the right thing for ethnic groups as well.

## 8. Dealing with emotions

*Use different educational tools to evaluate:*

- What are emotions? How do they influence us?
- What does society (family, friends, lovers, teachers, TV, movies, our boss) tell us about emotions?
- Are there situations when emotions are “allowed” and when they are not “allowed”?
- When we look at other cultures - are emotions lived in another way?
- Who finds it easy to show emotions? Who doesn't?
- Do boys and girls express emotions in different ways?
- Why could emotions scare us?
- What do emotions have to do with discrimination?
- What does discrimination do to us?
- How does it feel to be discriminated? Do we know this feeling?
- When we felt bad about something in our life, who was the person that would comfort us? How? In the past? Who is it now?
- How can we comfort somebody who expresses sorrow, pain or sadness?
- Can we exercise how to comfort and soothe? Do we go about it in different ways (For boys and girls, taking on board the need to respect a persons sexual orientation, culture, religion, etc)?

## 9. Dealing with outside pressure

Institutions and individuals - this could be the parents of the young people taking part, a funding body or other groups - might try to disturb and cut short your peer group education project. What can you and the group do to counter this outside pressure? As the coach you will defend your project and your group in the best way you can. This could be done by making a presentation to an important board or an influential individual or with your superior or manager.

At the same time it might be useful to discuss with your group power, pressure and counter-pressure and the role of pressure groups. It is important that young people know their rights and can exercise them.

- Who has power in our society? Why?
- How is power connected to racism?
- Where can we make out counter-powers? Or where is there a balance of power? How can a compromise be reached?
- What are the expectations that we have to other sectors of our society? (Institutions, school, youth club etc).
- How far does the group want to yield? What are the conditions for compromising?
- How can one be diplomatic - and reach most of your goals?
- Do the members of the group have less rights than adults because they are young?

## 10. Risky or dangerous situations

Your peer group may encounter resistance or aggression of racist, anti-semitic or xenophobic groups or individuals. Discuss what is considered to be risky or dangerous. Discuss what could be the outcome of an encounter with racist or aggressive groups.

- Would it be useful for the project to encounter such a confrontation?
- What would help to reach our goals without too many risks?

Maybe you want to add a discussion about violence, what is violence in its different forms. How does it relate to racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of intolerance?

## 11. Contacts with the media

Contacts with the media are important for your project and for the group members as well. Discuss the role of the media.

- How do the media influence our perception of the world?
- Why is media coverage important for our project?
- Do we need to appoint a 'media specialist' in the group?
- Do we need a policy on working with the media?

Offer exercises in how to write a letter to the editor, how to answer at an interview. How will the answers be reproduced by the media?

## 12. Drop-outs and how to 'keep the flame on'

There might be moments when some people want to leave the project. Discuss and explore with the group through exercises the impact of people dropping out. Maybe you want to use role-plays.

- How do different members of the group feel about it?
- What might be the reason to stop with the engagement? Burn-out? Other new interests? Do they have anything to do with the project?
- Is this a natural thing that happens, or are those that drop-out somehow considered to be traitorous to the group?
- How can the project live on?
- How can successors be found? Could it be negotiated that people leave from the project only when new persons are ready to come in for them?
- Do new-comers offer new chances, new insights?

### And finally

How can you and the peer group measure the success of your project?

You might have reached other people, you might have shared stories of discrimination, you might have stood up against racist jokes and slurs, you might have organised an event, you might have embarked for further goals and activities, you might have built a network, you might have changed the atmosphere within your group or youth club, or school.

As the Taoist say: the way is the goal.

*Everything that happens by doing such a project can be a worthwhile development if;*

- it does not destroy or endanger the project or burn out the young people or yourself
- it does not go against the aims you have set for the project
- it does not hurt people involved in an inadequate manner
- the group learns by mistakes.



## Section 8

### 9 sessions for training Peer Coaches

The main aim of these 9 sessions is to enable young people, workers or coaches to set up a peer group education project focused on issues concerning racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance and to explore ways of intergrating activities into their own youth work.

We have not included getting to know each other exercises, warming up activities, mid-way evaluation etc. This should be left to the trainer who is designing the programme or course. What you will find in this section are 9 sessions with ideas and guide-lines which you can use in the planning of a training course for coaches who are interested in peer group education and the topics of the 'all different - all equal' campaign.

All models and training sessions carry with them certain limitations. It is not possible, for example, to know the skills of the trainer, the atmosphere in the group, the knowledge level concerning racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance or the place where the training will take place. The training can take place in residential workshops lasting 6 days, during evening sessions held over several weeks or months. Most of the exercises can be used for groups of 15 - 35 persons.

We suggest that you read the different sessions, draw from the activities and plan the training in a way which is suitable for your situation or group.

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## Session 8.1 ME AND MY IDEAS

### What is peer group education?

#### INTRODUCTION

Me and My ideas is about **exploring the terminology** around peer group education and why to use it as an educational approach in the light of the campaign 'all different - all equal.'

#### MATERIALS

Flipchart paper  
Coloured markers (thick)  
Sheets with questions



#### TIME

2 - 2.5 hours



#### GROUP SIZE

15 - 20 people

#### PROCESS

Split people in small groups of four or five. Give the groups a sheet with the questions listed below and ask each group to discuss what they think about it. Explain that each group has to write down the main points of the discussion. At the end the groups will display their points on a flipchart paper for others to see and will give a short explanation.

Give a time limit for the group-work to discuss and prepare the flipchart paper. An hour or an hour and a half at least.

#### Questions

- What does the word 'peer' mean to you? What do you think peer education is?
- Make together a list of things which help people learn and a list of things that can make learning difficult?
- Say something about people who you have learnt things from. What sort of things? Who influenced you the most and who have influenced you less?
- Tell something about influences upon young people.
- What do you think of the ideas of young people learning from young people? (peer group education) What are the different benefits and difficulties of this educational approach?

#### CONCLUSION

This activity is an introduction to get people to think more about peer group education and whether it is something they would like to get involved in. At the end in the large group take enough time for the explanations of each group and allow time for general reflections and comments.

## Session 8.2 S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

### Peer group education in your own organisation

#### INTRODUCTION

There are many different ways of getting individuals, groups or organisations to assess their current situation in order that future plans can be made which are realistic and, therefore, achievable. The S.W.O.T. Analysis is one such method.

#### MATERIALS

A-4 white paper  
Pens



#### TIME

2 - 2.5 hour



#### GROUP SIZE

10 - 30 people

#### PROCESS

S.W.O.T. stands for:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

It can be used by individuals to consider their professional or personal situation especially at points of crisis or decision. Similarly groups of people, whether social, community, temporary or work based can explore their position. It can also be used within organisations to assess circumstances and assist in future planning of a peer group education programme. When used with groups or organisations the analysis should ideally first be done by individuals.

Each person is asked to make an individual S.W.O.T analysis of their own organisation or group. They can think about it or write or give a visual expression to the four aspects of the analysis. Then get people in pairs or small groups to share their thoughts and feelings on this trying to spend an equal amount of time on each of the four aspects. It should also be timed so that each person has a fair share of the time available. Large group discussion should then take place with all pairs or small groups sharing their perspectives. This should be focused on the S.W.O.T.'s affecting the group or organisations who want to set up peer group education programmes.

Either at this point or later, after some work has take place this S.W.O.T. analysis can form a useful base on which to build strategies for future development. (Session 6 - How to set up a peer group education programme)

#### CONCLUSION

This is good method for getting people to think about their groups and organisations, to make a critical analysis of what they can achieve and what they may need to help them.

## Session 8.3 SILENT FLOOR DISCUSSION

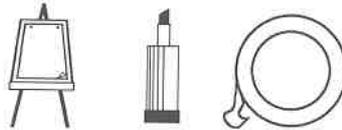
Racism, anti-semitism, intolerance and xenophobia, what does it mean to me?

### INTRODUCTION

A way of encouraging a **group to think about the issues of the campaign 'all different - all equal'** with each other is to use the Silent Floor Discussion. The basic rule is that no one speaks during the exercise.

### MATERIALS

Flipchart paper or wall paper  
20 Coloured markers (thick)  
Paper tape



### TIME

1.5 - 2 hours



### GROUP SIZE

10 - 20 people

### PROCESS

Everybody sits in a circle around the 4 big sheets of paper on the floor. Write the following words in large letters on the paper.

**RACISM**

**ANTI-SEMITISM**

**INTOLERANCE**

**XENOPHOBIA**

Depending on the size and interest of the group, you can also take 2 or 3 words. Ask people to write down everything what comes in their mind or what they associate with the word. They can also respond to something that has been written by somebody else. They can give counter-arguments, make links, ask questions etc. The basic rule is: **NOBODY SPEAKS.**

It is alright if more people are writing at the same time. Indicate that the discussion ends after ten minutes or at the moment that nobody is writing any more. After the silent session there is time to continue by a verbal discussion. Some questions can be posed, or some explanations can be asked about things written on the paper. The discussion can explore the topics of the session and people's thoughts and feelings about it and/or their feelings about the silent discussion approach.

### CONCLUSION

This session can be especially helpful for people who take some time to consider their reactions or for whom speaking in a large group is difficult. A 'Silent Floor Discussion' can be a very useful introductory exercise to a topic.

## Session 8.4 OPINION CARDS

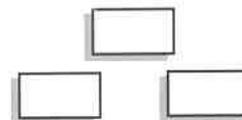
### Working with young people

#### INTRODUCTION

This opinion card activity is about raising awareness and challenging the perception of how young people are viewed by adults in society

#### MATERIALS

White postcards with the opinions (one set for each group)



#### TIME

1 -1.5 hours

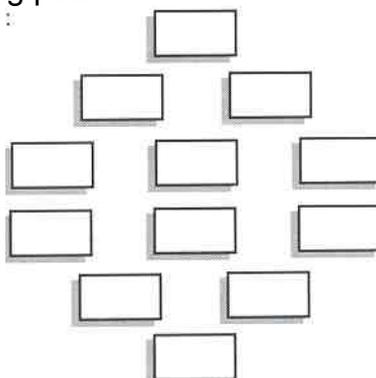


#### GROUP SIZE

10 - 25 people

#### PROCESS

Ask people to form groups of four or five and give each group a set of opinion cards. Each person in the group picks an opinion card and reads it out. The person places the card down on an imaginary line between two points: Agree and Disagree. You can use also the following pattern:



Other members of the group now say whether they support where the card lies or think it should be moved, giving their reasons.

Once the groups have placed their cards, everybody can walk around and look at the position of the opinion cards of the others. Open this out to a general discussion in the large group.

Some specific questions should also be posed:

- What opinions did most people agree/disagree with? Why?
- Was it easy or difficult to reach group agreement?
- Did they feel that each group member had an equal amount of speaking time?

## **OPINIONS ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE (\*)**

This are examples, of course you can add yours or ask the group to write statements about young people.

- Young people, as a rule take more from society than they give back.
- Young people think talking to adults about life is a waste of time.
- You need to learn to love yourself before you can love anyone else.
- You can't expect the world to look after you.
- Young people can make a big difference to the world.
- Young people can't influence anything in the adult world.
- It's important to live your life in the way that your friends do.
- It's important to live your life in a way that's true to yourself.
- Someone will always help you out when you need help in life.
- Young people are a bad influence on each other, they need adult discipline.
- Without the interference of adults, young people could make this a much better world.
- Young people respond well to adult encouragement in dealing with problems.

(\* Extract from Just Us!: Young people in action with young people, by John Holt and Philip Hope, British Red Cross, 1994)

## **CONCLUSION**

This session is intended to help the group address issues such as attitudes towards young people, needs of young people, working with young people etc. Either at this point or later this activity can form a useful base for discussion about the role of the peer coach.

A more active version of this session is possible with a small group. Draw in a room an imaginary line between two points. One point is labelled agree and the other disagree. Read out an opinion card and everybody must then stand where they want between the two points. Some people can give an explanation and say why they choose for this position, for those who perhaps do not have a strong opinion, the middle or centre can offer an 'undecided' position.

## Session 8.5 PROJECT PLANNING

### How to set up a peer group education programme

#### INTRODUCTION

This session is about how to set up a peer group education programme and what action to take.

#### MATERIALS

Flipchart paper or wall paper  
Copies of check-list 'Step by Step'  
Coloured markers (thick)



#### TIME

2 - 2.5 hours



#### GROUP SIZE

10 - 25 people

#### PROCESS

Form working groups of four. Ask each group to select one possible action project that they would like to consider carrying out. It is important for the groups to have a clear starting point, a concrete idea for a project. Give them a copy of the check-list to help them to develop their peer group education programme.

Ask the groups to note down their plans on a flipchart considering each step in the process of the project. These should be stuck to the walls so that others can read them. Allow people to move around the room to look at the plans. Finally, open up for general discussion if you feel that useful points could be made about some of the things shown.

#### CONCLUSION

This planning activity has its value in getting people to plan the different steps and to consider what may happen with their plans. It can help ensure that idealistic ideas have a practical and realistic root. The S.W.O.T. Analysis made of the organisation can be used as a basis for the planning work.

## Session 8.6 CASE STUDIES

### Your role as a coach

#### INTRODUCTION

This case study activity is focused on the peer coaches involved in peer group education programmes it is designed to help them to examine their role, the empowerment of young people and possible conflicts which can arise.

#### MATERIALS

Case studies and questions



#### TIME

1.5 - 2 hours



#### GROUP SIZE

10 - 20 people

#### PROCESS

Ask people to work in small groups (4-5). Each group is given a copy of a case study. The task is to read the description and to consider the questions and note down the responses. Each group needs to identify a spokes-person and feedback with a short presentation in the large group.

After the presentation several questions could be raised and common areas and differences between the groups identified.

- Who is in control?
- What are potential areas of conflict?
- What would the feeling of the young people be in these situations?

#### CASE STUDY 1

You are involved in a peer group education programme which has been running successfully for 2 years, the young people are responsible for planning and running sessions with other groups of young people on Human Rights and conflict mediation. Sessions take place in youth centres although some take place in schools, they have also recruited new members and the team numbers around 15 with 10 of these being more committed. They have organised themselves with roles and job descriptions, recruitment, planning, publicity, dealing with administration, etc. The funders of the project made up of local education authority and private sponsors feel that the young people are not responsible enough to manage their funds. They would like the youth leader or coach to take financial responsibility for the project. The young people feel that they should have control of what they do.

- What are the issues arising?
- What strategies would you pursue with the young people?
- What skills are required to deal with this situation?
- What support and resources would you need to handle the situation effectively?

### **CASE STUDY 2**

You work in a school as a teacher, your subject area includes work on equality and Human Rights. Your headmaster has recently attended a conference on peer education and is very keen to see that you develop such a programme with your class. He has a model from the conference and you have been instructed to implement this for project which aims to deal with a number of racist incidents in the school and local community. When the idea is suggested to young people there is little response, they are not excited by the idea of peer education or the subject of racism.

- How do you react?
- What do you say: to the headmaster? to the young people?
- How do you follow up this situation?
- How do you respond to the issue (racism incidents) within the school?

### **CASE STUDY 3**

You work at a youth centre where for the past twelve months there has been a successful programme organised by a committed group of young people. They work in youth centres across the town to reduce prejudice against people who have physical disabilities. Some of the group are able bodied and others are not, they are interested in the issues and many people acknowledge that the project is a great success both in integrating able and disabled and in the peer education work they do. Three new members of the youth centre would like to join the group, the members of the main group are resistant to this and feel that they will not 'fit in'.

- What are the issues involved?
- What do you do?
- How do you reflect this issue within the youth centre programme?
- What strategy would you develop to prevent a repeat of this or similar situations?

### **CONCLUSION**

Activities which are case studies have the advantage of allowing people to connect themselves with a situation before investigating in their own roles as peer coaches.

## Session 8.7 NETWORKING

### Identifying the different needs of peer educators

#### INTRODUCTION

An activity designed to allow people to consider the different types of support and to develop ways of building a network of people concerned with racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance.

#### MATERIAL

Flipchart paper  
A4 paper  
Pens



#### TIME

2 -2.5 hours



#### GROUP SIZE

15 - 30 people

#### PROCESS

The fact is that no one is self-sufficient because we all depend on others for certain things. This can be illustrated with a short activity in the large group. Everybody, draw a line down the centre of a A4 paper. At the left side they list the names of people they need and like to have around them, or make contact with on regular times. Now on the right side, after each name: what sort of support is that person giving to you, why do you need that person, why you like to have contacts with that person etc.

Ask them to call out all the support and needs other people meet for them (no names), while you write the points on the flipchart. Review the list and try to identify different areas for needs and support.

For example:

- physical needs: food, air, sleep etc.
- care and protection: clothes, shelter, health service etc.
- social needs: security of a community, a feeling of belonging etc.
- personal development: to develop our interests and talents, the need for a purpose in life etc.

Brain-storm all the situations where peer educators are likely to need support. This could be on issues concerning group work leadership, knowledge and activities around Racism. Go through the brain-storm list and ask the people to choose a situation which they would like to discuss more in depth. The people should now work in smaller groups on the situation they have chosen. Ask the group to address the question of what support in this particular situation is needed and how to realise it. In the large group, ask the small groups to feed back all the ideas they shared and list major points about support structures and how they can be organised.

## **CONCLUSION**

These two activities could open the way for some further exploration in the needs for different kind of support, information or training. The need for support will vary over time for each individual. The peer coach needs the skills to provide in a variety of ways which should be flexible.

## Session 8.8 USING AUDIO VISUAL MATERIAL

Educational activities in the area of racism, anti-semitism, intolerance and xenophobia

### INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of a course, which has explored and demonstrated peer group education and racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance in theory and practise. This activity provides a much needed outlet for the **creative potential** of individuals and the group.

### MATERIAL

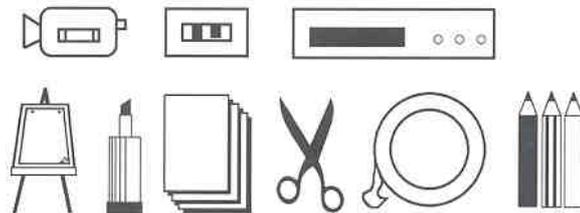
Video equipment

A tested and tried video related to the issues of the campaign

Flipchart paper or wall paper

Coloured markers

Box with: glue, scissors, tape, coloured paper, markers etc.



### TIME

2.5 hours



### GROUP SIZE

10 - 30 people

### PROCESS

The group is told that the aim of this activity is to create a 45 minutes programme around racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance issues, using video as stimulus material. Each group (5-6) can decide for themselves for what age range the programme is intended and how the 45 minutes is to be used. Afterwards, the group watches the video, participants can take notes, if they wish.

Participants have 90 minutes to discuss and to devise the content and methodology. The final negotiated programme is written up on the flipchart paper and stuck on the wall. One member of the group should remain beside it as a guide, to give any clarification or explanation if needed. Other members then can walk around, but will also take their turn as guide to give everybody an opportunity to read the activities.

### CONCLUSION

Other stimulus material can be used, such as cartoons, a series of photographs or slides, a set of posters, articles from magazines or newspapers. The resulting programmes are often innovative, and can be run over a whole day if possible. The activity should be run to get feedback from the rest of the group.

## Session 8.9 PERSONAL ACTION PLAN AND EVALUATION

### What did I learn and how am I going to use it?

#### INTRODUCTION

This session is an opportunity for people to formulate action plans to follow on from this course and to assess what they have learned during this course.

#### MATERIALS

Copies of the Action Plan sheet (page 68)  
Sheets with evaluation questions



#### TIME

2 - 2.5 hour



#### GROUP SIZE

10 - 30 people

#### PROCESS

This activity is designed to get people to think what they can do within a specified time, one or three or six months. Each person should have a copy of the **Action Plan** sheet (page 68) which they work through alone.

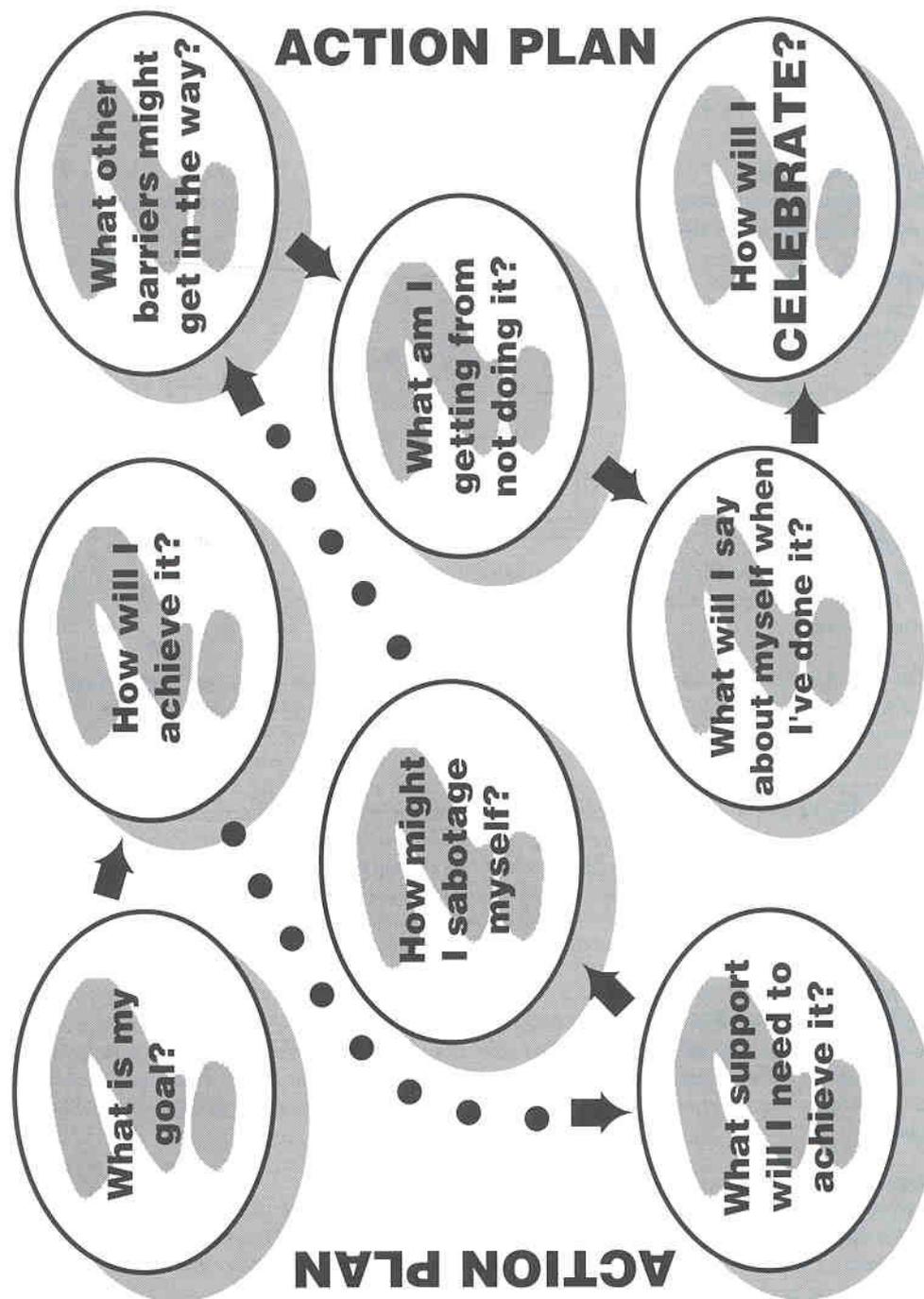
First they must decide on their goal: what it is they want to do in relation to what they have learnt about racism, anti-semitism, intolerance and xenophobia and peer group education. It could relate to their personal or professional life; it could be to acquire more knowledge concerning the above mentioned issues; to attend a course for anti-racist education; to read a book about peer group education; to set up a training course for peer educators; to talk with family and friends about the increasing racist incidents etc. Whatever they choose, it should be realistic and achievable within the time frame that they specify.

After answering the questions alone they should then form pairs to share their answers with each other. Then in the large group each person should tell the others what the goal is and how they will celebrate when they achieved the goal. It is important to acknowledge the difficulties that could lead to sabotage but, finally to stress the need for - and the value of - celebration.

For the **evaluation** it's important to use a method of evaluation that best suits the group. It is also important that the course evaluation is an on going and joint affair (including discussion of trainers and group behaviour). Described here is one evaluation technique which has been successfully used in different settings. Select a few sentences which are appropriate for the evaluation session, write them on a sheet and hand this out to the group. Explain that these sheets will be handed in and that they do not have to sign them.

Unfinished sentences:

- Right now I feel.....
- Next session I hope....
- The best thing about this session was....
- One thing ● really liked was....
- I wish I could....
- I think we could have....
- I learnt....
- One thing ● I did not like was....
- I would change....
- Next time we....
- This course has been...
- I want to know....
- I can propose....



## Section 9

### Peer Educators Training Days

The training for peer educators is based on what they need to do for the planned projects and to provide stimulation for actually carrying out activities as means in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance. Small group discussions and brain-storm sessions prior to the days will reveal the knowledge and skills they already have and help them to plan the training days.

*The training often focuses on topics such as:*

#### YOU AS THE PEER EDUCATOR

- Why am I involved in racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance activities?
- Where do I stand?
- What are my support systems?

#### DESIGNING THE PROGRAMME

- Why include some topics and not others?
- What knowledge is needed?
- Which techniques will I choose and use?

#### YOU AND THE GROUP

- How will I deal with unexpected situations?
- How do I work with the group?
- How people behave in groups?

#### PLANNING AND EVALUATION

- What are the expectations of the people involved in the project?
- What makes a good working environment?
- When to organise it?

Training days, usually from morning to evening (10.00 am to 10.00 pm) on a Saturday or Sunday have the advantage of allowing time to work closely with a small

group over a longer period of time. These offer better opportunities to get to know people, for finding out what other people really think, discussing problems and getting different opinions of how to handle the problems etc.

The responsibility for planning and running these days can be divided between the peer educators and the peer coach. Three for each day is a good number. Responsibilities should be clearly defined by being involved in planning the group will get variety and some implicit training in organisational skills.

The content of the training days may of course be varied enormously. It is important that the topic is one which the group is interested in. That it is relevant for the planned peer education project in the area of racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance if they are to be fully involved in the training days.

There are many resource books around from which ideas can be chosen for activities which are fun and will get a group thinking and discussing. With a little imagination many of these can be adopted to suit the theme. The most important thing is to make a start this depends a great deal on the group and the peer coaches. Introducing a range of stimulus materials such as cartoons, video, poster set, articles from newspapers, role plays are good ways of starting and creating an atmosphere in which discussion is possible.

The following activities can be used as a stimulus for discussions, most of them have been tried and tested in a variety of settings and with different groups. The ideal group size for such activities is, depending on the number of trainers involved, 10 - 30 persons. They may need to be adapted a little for the particular age group.

## 9.1 THE MERRY-GO-AROUND

### INTRODUCTION

An activity to encourage people to talk openly about their feelings and ideas concerning the topics of the campaign “all different - all equal” to other people. The exercise also allows for one to one communication with a large number of different people in a short space of time.

### MATERIALS

Trigger questions, 13 - 15 questions are probably enough.  
Chairs, arranged in one outer and one inner circle facing each other.



### TIME

2 hours



### GROUP SIZE

15 - 30 people

### PROCESS

People are asked to sit opposite (and facing) another person arranged around the room. Chairs should not be too close that pairs can overhear conversations taking place near to them. Spacing the pairs out will help them to concentrate on their partner. If there is an odd number of people one chair is put slightly outside the circle for a person to sit on (to make a ‘three’).

The people are told that they will move around, so they will not only speak to the person opposite them now. They will have three minutes each time to speak to each other. Every time you will call out the question. The question can vary according to the topic you are working on and the age and level of the group.

*The following questions are some suggestions:*

- What is your reaction if your best friend told you (s)he had mobbed someone?
- A good friend of yours tells a racist joke to a group of friends. What do you say?
- On the wall of your youth club somebody writes racist graffiti. What is your response?
- What is racism?
- Why does it say “Blacks go home” on the wall?
- Already for a long time it is very popular between your friends to use racist name-calling such as Four Eyes, Paki, Blackie, Gypsies. How do you react?
- What does it mean when you stereotype people?

- What could be done to challenge some of the negative views and stereotypes of minority groups?

After each question and three minutes conversation the people on the outside of the circle are asked to stand and shift one (or more) place to the right. Then they discuss the second question, which you have called out. After five or six questions like this, ask the inner circle to shift one (or more) place to the left. Another five or six questions, with changes of place should take place.

For the last two or three questions ask both circles to make up their own questions to get an answer. By this stage they have an idea of the exercise and the type of questions.

At the end ask people generally whether it was easy to answer the questions?

Did they find something out about their personal limits concerning the issues?

Would this exercise influence the way in which they train or inform other young people?

## **CONCLUSION**

This exercise can be good as starting point to consider the complexity of some issues. It can also be useful near the end, if people are planning to spread their ideas further, by using peer education or other kinds of action. It is a very useful way to enable them to continue their discussions with each other if they wish, so it could be structured to take place prior to time off or a break.

## 9.2. CREATIVE ART WORK

### INTRODUCTION

Creative Art Work is a way for a lot of people to explore their own imagination and to re-assess their creative potential. Being creative has many languages and is as varied as people are. It can provide an alternative outlet for group members who find it hard to express themselves during discussions. Creative work is vital and there are many different forms to suit each individual. One example is described here: Poetry writing.

### MATERIALS

White cards (like postcards)  
A4 paper  
Coloured pencils  
Calligraphy pens  
Typewriter



### TIME

2.5 - 3 hours



### GROUP SIZE

10 - 30 people

### PROCESS

Begin this session by reading out a poem, song, story or proverb and its meaning to your own life. Explain that we may have heard and read sentences, poems, songs, stories etc. in newspapers or magazines which we felt strongly about, and which expressed our current situation, our feelings or hopes for the future. In this exercise encourage them to recall and write on paper their own poems and stories about racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance. About their own experiences or those from others.

*Turn to the next page for two suggestions, which you can us*

**Une Europe unie pour un monde sans peur,  
une fraternité de toutes les couleurs**

Dans notre grande Europe  
Il est beaucoup de DIFFERENTS  
Des gens de toutes les couleurs  
Des DIFFERENTS qui te font peur

Il y a les blancs et les jaunes  
les noirs et les cafés au lait  
il y a ceux qui croient au Dieu  
il y a ceux qui n'y croient pas

et ceux qui te montrent le poing  
et ceux qui te tendent la main

l'autre n'est pas ton ennemi  
tu pourras t'en faire un ami

si tous deux vous ouvrez le poing  
si tous deux vous tendez le main

Tu es un DIFFERENT aussi  
pour ce garçon ou cette fille  
de ta rue ou du bout du monde  
n'oublie pas que la terre est ronde

avec tes mots et tes couleurs  
lance ton cri contre la peur  
écris-nous le plus beau poème  
celui des DIFFERENTS qui s'aiment.

*ARTHUR HAULOT*  
*Président de la Maison internationale*  
*de la Poésie*  
*(Le Soir du mercredi 22 mars 1995)*

when I am born, I am black  
à ma naissance, je suis noir

when I grow up, I am black  
quand je grandis, je suis noir

when I go out in the sun, I am black  
quand je suis au soleil, je suis noir

when I am cold, I am black  
quand j'ai froid, je suis noir

but you!  
mais toi!

when you are born, you are pink  
à ta naissance tu es rose

when you grow up, you are white  
quand tu grandis tu es blanc

when you go on the sun, you are red  
quand tu vas au soleil, tu es rouge

when you are cold, you are blue  
quand tu as froid, tu es blue

when you die, you are purple  
quand tu es mort, tu es violet

and you have the guts to call me coloured!!  
et tu as le culot de m'appeler le coloré!!

*UNKNOWN*

These writings can then be shared with the group. Continue this exercise by using small illustrations, a decorative frame or the use of a calligraphy pen to illustrate their own texts. After that copy them onto a good sheet of paper or white cards and make a small booklet of all the writings.

## CONCLUSION

Before doing the exercise of poetry writing check the literacy skills of the group. One way to modify this exercise would be to draw or paint a picture reflecting a song, poem etc. Other creative art work methods which you can use are: a large picture or mural painting, t-shirt painting, writing songs or making music together, taking photos, face-painting etc.

## 9.3 TACKLING A STATEMENT

### INTRODUCTION

When we as human beings have conversations we use words to express our opinions and points of view. We try to describe reality and present facts with these words. However, words also reveal our attitudes. Words do not just convey facts, but also our values and opinions. Words can be charged with emotions. This four corners activity, can stimulate discussion on specific issues.

### MATERIALS

Open space so that people can move freely around the room.

Four signs on each of the four corners of the room, indicating four positions:

✓ ✓ = strongly agree

✓ = agree

✗ = disagree

✗ ✗ = strongly disagree

Flipchart and papers

Markers and Tape

### TIME

45 minutes



### GROUP SIZE

15 - 30 people

### PROCESS

Everyone stands in the middle of the room while a statement is presented, for instance about Racism. It could be helpful to have the statements written up on a flipchart or board. The statements should be carefully designed to draw out a wide spectrum of responses, probably six is enough in a session.

*These statements should not be questions, for example:*

- Everybody has prejudices
- Europe is multi-cultural
- National culture and international culture must be learned at the same time
- It is not enough to be curious about other cultures

People are asked to think about the statement for a minute and then to choose the corner which represents their response to the statement. Nobody should stand in the middle or hover between positions. They must make a decision. Once in a corner, people should pair up with someone in their own corner to discuss the statement (3 minutes). Then they enter discussion with someone from an opposite corner. They should then finish by going to the corner that reflects their view on the subject now. This may or may not have changed.

### CONCLUSION

This peer learning activity can be applied to a wide range of controversial statements and can be used with people of different ages. It is possible when people are back in their corner, then to ask one representative from each corner to explain briefly their choice to the others. Further discussion at this point is also possible.

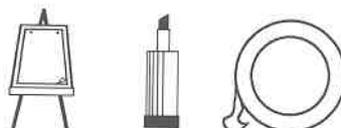
## 9.4 BLACK AND WHITE

### INTRODUCTION

An activity to encourage people to look at images and words which are associated with the words BLACK and WHITE in different contexts and see if alternatives could be used. An introduction exercise to promote the use of 'politically correct language'.

### MATERIAL

Flipchart paper  
Coloured markers  
A large room or hall  
Tape



### TIME

1 hour



### GROUP SIZE

15 - 20 people

### PROCESS

Divide into small groups of 4-5 people and ask them to write the words 'BLACK' and 'WHITE' on two separate sheets of paper. The small groups have to write down all the words and images which come into their minds when they think of the words 'black' and 'white'.

For example:

- I White Christmas
- I In black and white
- I White House
- I Black Death
- I White-collar
- I Black Humour

When the two lists are complete, come back into the large group and ask a representative from each of the groups to report back on what they came up with.

*Lead into a general discussion raising issues such as:*

- What did you notice about the lists you drew up? Were they mainly positive or mainly negative?
- What does this tell us about the ideas most people have in their heads about blackness and whiteness? Do these ideas affect us?
- Can anyone think of alternative phrases which mean the same thing but don't use the word 'black' or 'white' in a negative way?

### CONCLUSION

Instead of a report of a representative of each group, you can ask them also to make up a short drama sketch about two or three of the words which they pick out of their list. After the performance you can then lead into a general discussion.

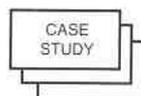
## 9.5 CASE STUDIES

### INTRODUCTION

This activity based on case study situations is about planning for peer group education. This will allow the group to start thinking about barriers or difficulties which can occur during their projects.

### MATERIAL

Case studies  
Copy of the 'Step by Step' check-list (page 47)



### TIME

2.5 hour



### GROUP SIZE

15 - 25 people

### PROCESS

After an introduction and short discussion about different settings within which peer group education can take place split the group into smaller groups. Each group should work with one of the six case studies which refer to different situations, some are for projects taking place in school or educational institutions and some in grass roots projects coming from young people themselves. These can be re-written based on local situations relating to intolerance.

Each working group will need a copy of the 'Step by Step' questions which they should address: These can be adapted for example if the group need to address particular aspects like finance or the role of the coach in more detail. Each working group should plan a short presentation to share their thoughts, feelings and discussions about the situation. You should stress that their discussions should focus on peer group education as the method.

## CASE STUDIES

### **Formal / In school case study 1**

You are a teacher, in your class of 25, there are 8 new pupils who have come as refugees. They have joined your class in the past year. Recently there have been problems in the school playground, the indigenous pupils harass, mob and tease the newcomers, the new pupils in defence start to react aggressively, engaging in fist fights. Although there haven't been any violent incidents yet you are concerned that there will be. You would like to launch a peer group education programme to deal with this situation.

### **Formal/In school case study 2**

You are in a school where they have a ninth grade class with a majority of immigrants. Lately there have been several feuds between the immigrants and the other students. You feel the situation is getting worse and decide to try and solve this problem. You are also an immigrant, but you have not taken part in the feuds. You would like to create a positive role model for the restless immigrants who don't feel welcome. You contact your teacher for help and guidance in setting up a peer group education programme in your school.

### **Informal settings/Out of school, case study 3**

You are a worker in a youth centre. Nearby a Gypsy camp site is located and for a number of months every year Gypsy youth come to use your centre. This creates friction between them and the young people who use the club all year round. Each group tries to mark territory against the other one with the intention of taking over the youth centre. Some of the young people come to you and say that they are tired of this conflict and would like to make some steps towards a more peaceful situation. You suggest that a peer group education project is started at the centre.

**Informal settings/Out of school, case study 4**

You are a youth worker. After working at the same centre for several years you have developed good working relationships with local young people. In recent weeks you have been working with them on a project about sex education, one of the group has disclosed that he is homosexual. He has declared this to his close friends. Some have told the rest of the young people and now they are making jokes and 'freezing him out' of the group. Approximately 1/3 of the members want to set up a peer group education program to educate the others about homophobia. They approach you for help.

**Grass roots, case study 5**

You are a young person, your local community has a Jewish Cemetery which has recently been vandalised, some of the buildings and memorials have been painted on and smashed. You feel very bad about this and suspect that young people are responsible for the damage, you would like to plan some work which will help young people understand about Jewish history and people. You and your friends have come together to plan a peer group education programme for other young people.

**Grass roots, case study 6**

You are a young person, you live in a small town where they have just opened a refugee centre. One night a group of your peers attack and vandalise the centre. You feel bad about the situation and decide to take action. You collect a group of your friends together who feel the same way as you do, you decide that your assignment is to create a better understanding between the refugees and the locals.



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