



Adolescents prepare for a discussion with other people in their community about something that interests them.



4/5

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30-45 min



Activity Overview

Purpose

Turn discussion topics into community dialogue sessions.

Objectives

Adolescents will be able to:

- ▶ Collaborate and make decisions.
- ▶ Communicate ideas and opinions.

Competency domains

Empathy and respect; Communication and expression; Problem solving and managing conflict.

Works well for

Adolescents who have developed advocacy and communication skills, and are interested in exchanging ideas about an issue with other young people or adults in their community.

Phase

Taking Action.

Before

Adolescents should have already chosen a topic for their dialogue through participation in activities such as **Our environment, Our challenges, Our solutions, Forming problem and opportunity statements** or **Collaborative decision making**.

After

After the dialogue, adolescents should take time to debrief, discuss their feelings, review what they have learned, and plan any follow-up activities (inside or outside of sessions).

Preparation

Bring any notes or materials from recommended previous activities that may be useful for the session.



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At the top of the marker board or flip chart paper, write the topic that adolescents have chosen for their dialogue and the following questions:

- ▶ Who would we like to discuss this topic with?
- ▶ What would we like to share with them about this topic?
- ▶ What would we like to learn from them about this topic?

2

||| Facilitator says:

“Discuss the questions and to agree on basic goals for the dialogue.”

3

Write the following questions on the marker board, or on different pieces of flip chart paper. Ask the adolescents to develop plans for each step – either as a group, or by dividing into three committees.

Dialogue questions and facilitation plan:

- ▶ What questions will we discuss in the dialogue?
- ▶ How will we structure the dialogue?
- ▶ Will this be an open dialogue where any adolescent and adult can speak? Or will there be a panel with adolescent and adult representatives who take turns speaking?
- ▶ Will there be a moderator (or a pair of moderators, one adolescent and one adult) to make sure that each speaker stays on topic? If so, who will it be?
- ▶ What will be our final questions for the dialogue? How will we close the dialogue in a way that is positive, and opens up opportunities for follow-up discussions or actions?

Invitations and community support:

- ▶ Which adults (individuals or organizations) can help us to prepare for a positive dialogue? Working in partnership with a supportive

community group or community leaders may help to create a constructive dialogue.

- ▶ Who will we invite? How will we invite them? Sending formal invitations may help adults to take the dialogue seriously and to see it as an important opportunity.
- ▶ What steps should we take to promote adults’ interest in this dialogue and to ensure that they participate constructively? It can be helpful to meet adults in advance to gain their support.

Time, location and logistics:

- ▶ Where can we hold the dialogue? Consider a location where both adolescents and adults feel comfortable and welcome.
- ▶ When will we hold it? Choose a time and date when community members can attend, and that gives the adolescents sufficient time to prepare.
- ▶ What do we need to do to set up the space for the dialogue? Make sure that the space is big enough to include everyone who is invited, and that everyone will be able to hear the dialogue.

Share and Take Away

4

Explain:

Review the exercise by asking the following. Adolescents should present their ideas, including the questions for the dialogue. Encourage them to agree on a realistic plan that includes all of the necessary steps for a successful event.

5

Agree on the next steps, and discuss whether the following sessions will include time for preparations for the dialogue. Make sure that the adolescents take at least one session to rehearse their dialogue through role-play.



Community dialogue

Do & Don't

- ✓ Be sensitive to gender issues involving community dialogue in the community.
- ✓ Review the adolescents' plans for the community dialogue. Help them to develop plans that will promote a productive and interesting exchange of ideas.
- ✓ Identify areas in the plan where the adolescents need support from others.
- ✓ Encourage community members to participate and give meaningful feedback in the dialogue. It is important to meet with community members in advance (with or without the adolescents), to explain the purpose of the dialogue, gain their support and ensure that they take the adolescents' views seriously.
- ✗ Force adolescents to speak at the dialogue if they don't want to.
- ✗ Let adolescents choose a sensitive topic that may cause them (or community members) to become angry, make accusations or blame each other.
- ✗ Move forward with the community dialogue if it does not appear that adults or other community members will participate constructively. This could set the adolescents up for disappointment and exacerbate bad feelings with community members. Organize a different type of event or activity instead.

Adaptation

Work with adolescents to adapt the community dialogue to the people they specifically want to engage and share views with. For example, they may want to hold a dialogue with their parents, teachers or peers.

Support the adolescents to organize an event that meets their hopes and goals. This could be an exhibition or performance, rather than a community dialogue.

Environment

Indoor or outdoor space, large area for bigger groups.

Supplies

- ▶ A marker board or at least three pieces of flip chart paper.
- ▶ Markers.

Improvise

Adolescents could hold the dialogue as a follow-up discussion to an exhibition or performance they organize.

Continue

Support the adolescents and community members to identify follow-up steps to the dialogue, based on their shared interests and goals. This could include holding further dialogues on other topics, or working together on projects or activities.

