



Speak Out Toolkit

Creating Safe Spaces
to Challenge Narratives
of Division & Hatred.

NYA
Youth Work
Academy



Delivered by National Youth Agency Funded by Building a Stronger Britain Together

Contents

Welcome	1
Introduction	2
Activity Theme 1: Let's talk about it	3
1. All on the Same Page	
2. Guess Who Gameshow - Looking Beyond Your Bias	
3. Story Box	
4. Agree / Disagree Continuums	
5. Facts and Interpretation	
Activity Theme 2: Nurturing a positive self-identity	9
1. Global Community	
2. Your Music	
3. Frame It	
4. Get it Heard	
5. Affirmation Circle	
6. Looking Up	
Activity Theme 3: Developing a safe space for young people to express themselves and belong	14
1. What's in a Name?	
2. Our Space, Our Community	
3. Three Words	
4. Food Glorious Food!	
5. Creating Change	
6. All that we Share	
7. Frisbee It	
Activity Resources for Facilitators	19
Supporting Information & Organisations	32

Welcome

Youth work in England provides spaces and relationships to benefit young people's personal and social development. By using informal education, young people are encouraged to develop their social, moral, and political knowledge and skills, and to develop their voice for influence and agency in their own lives, communities, and wider society.

Youth work does this by providing young people with trusted positive relationships with adults that are rooted in youth-led, youth-empowered and youth-participation agendas. These relationships are essential for many young people living with the challenges in the world today.

Globalisation, and with it the rapid evolution of digital spaces, brings new positives and challenges for young people, and those working with them. The interconnectedness of the world today, means that young people are exposed to a far greater range of thoughts, ideas, views and materials than ever before, and with far easier access. This can be positive, bringing new perspectives and opportunities, allowing young people to connect to others in a way that can make them feel safer and more included than ever before. However, people that are already marginalised, vulnerable, disadvantaged or unhappy, or who have few trusted relationships, may often be drawn to make other connections influenced by dialogues of hatred or division, or exploited through these same spaces, along with those in the real world. We constantly find that in the absence of positive relationships, negative ones often will prevail.

Adolescence is a time of defining the self, identity, and your place in the world, and so there are inherent risks and opportunities for young people's views to be influenced and shaped by a variety of different sources; peers, family, media, digital spaces, school. Good youth work should be an opportunity for young people to explore their ideological development in a safe environment that brings challenge to narratives, and encourages critical thinking and debate. Some of the topics that might be raised can be daunting for workers; views borne from hatred and divisive agendas that don't reflect contemporary British values can make us feel uncomfortable. Young people that are using language that is oppressive, or prejudiced, or relaying propaganda that might be highly contentious in our society, can feel risky.

QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RAISED BY WORKERS INCLUDE:

'How do we protect all of our young people when these things are raised?'

'How do we safeguard ourselves as workers?'

'I'm not sure I know enough about this topic, what shall I do?'

Youth workers are ideally placed to begin to challenge narratives of division and hatred. They are skilled in creating opportunities for young people to explore themselves and the world around them, and are able to provide that trusted, positive relationship with a role model – something that is essential in helping prevent negative outcomes. They are passionate about youth voice work, and equipping young people with the skills to include themselves and challenge injustice and inequalities.

This toolkit supports this youth work pedagogy by providing ideas for activities to support work with young people around these more difficult topics. Through promoting safe spaces to explore differences positively, we create spaces and societies of tolerance, inclusion and cohesiveness, but where debate and reflection are encouraged.

Use these activities within the framework of youth work ethics, values and principles, with the confidence of professional youth worker skills, and recognise the positive difference that is made for young people navigating the divided world.

For topic specific advice and information (e.g. around homophobia), there is a list of specific organisations that are experts in their field. This is included at the back of the toolkit, and all contact information was correct at the time of publication.

This toolkit supports the skills workshop delivered around England in 2019, but is a standalone document that is free to download from the NYA Network. It was funded through Building a Stronger Britain Together via The Home Office.

Introduction

This toolkit is designed to be used with young people aged 11+ to stimulate discussion, thought and reflection around key themes such as identity, belonging, diversity and community. Actively addressing these issues encourages young people to build meaningful relationships with their peers and develop a strong sense of their identity, therefore reducing the risk posed by extremist narratives. Activities require minimal resources to enable them to be used in a variety of settings such as centre based, detached, schools and one to one work.

Please note, it takes an exceptional level of honesty, integrity and moral judgment to help young people explore their own values and beliefs without imposing your own.

The activities in this toolkit have been themed into three sections, with the aim of being simple to plan and deliver. They all encouraged learning through doing dialogue and having fun together.



The toolkit has three themes providing a holistic approach to addressing issues with young people. The themes are:

- 1. Let's talk about it** – These activities are designed specifically to promote dialogue around extremist narratives and viewpoints of division. By being upfront about this issue, it supports young people to critically reflect on their thoughts and opinions and encourages healthy and open dialogue.
- 2. Nurturing a positive self-identity** – If young people have a positive self-identity and self-esteem, this can help support the development of a healthy and positive attitude towards diversity and reduce their vulnerabilities of being drawn into extremist narratives / groups. Young people are equipped with the skills to think critically, express their voice and believe in themselves.
- 3. Developing a safe space for young people to express themselves and belong** – If young people feel accepted by others for who they are, then they can begin to feel safe, and feel a sense of belonging. Belonging is key in nurturing positive mental health and lessens the fear of 'othering', whilst creating a positive and diverse safe space.

Activity Theme 1:

Let's talk about it

ALL ON THE SAME PAGE – PAIRING EXERCISE

Aim	This is an activity that supports young people to understand key definitions linked with extremism. It is important that young people's understanding is informed and accurate for meaningful conversations to then take place around these issues.
Group Size	6-20 young people
Time	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Tables and chairs set up to facilitate groups of 3-4 young people.
Preparation	You will need to print off the word and definition on to separate sheets / cards. Produce some cards that identify real-life scenarios relating to the words below. These need to be relevant for your local community and context. Look at local papers and tear out relevant articles, take screenshots of any recent local social media coverage (news, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook etc.) to share with the group.
WORD	DEFINITIONS (Refer to this for the correct answers.)
Extremist	A person who holds extreme personal, political or religious views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action.
Extremist vulnerabilities	The process where someone's vulnerabilities (e.g. loneliness, mental health issues, personal experience of hate crime) are used (exploited) to draw people into crime or acts of hatred.
Propaganda	Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.
Discrimination	Being treated less favourably because of a characteristic like age, gender, race or religion.
Radicalisation	The process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.
Ideology	A system of ideas and ideals.
Xenophobia	Fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners, or of anything that is strange or foreign.
Anti-Semitic	Hostility to or prejudice against Jews.
Hate Crime	A crime, typically one involving violence, that is motivated by prejudice on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability.
Prejudice	Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.
Sexism	Prejudice or ill treatment of a person based on their gender (sex).
Homophobia	Prejudice or ill treatment of a person based on their sexuality.
Transphobia	Prejudice or ill treatment of a transgender person.

Resources	Word and definitions cards & Blu tack.
Activity	Put the young people into groups of 3-4 and provide them with a copy of the word and definition cards above. Ask them to match up the definition with the word they think it represents. After they have finished ask them to add the real-life scenarios to which word and definition it relates to, this helps to bring it to reality. After each group has completed the activity, bring them back together and work through what the groups have selected as their definitions. Emphasise that this process is for learning, not judging what groups have selected. Facilitate this process with questions that encourage thinking and debate. Questions could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you think that? • Can you recognise when prejudice happens? • Do you know of any extremist groups, if so, do you know what their messages are? • Why do you think people hold extremist views and what fuels that? • What impact does it have on you and your community?
Supporting Resources	5 minutes YouTube: Heimat - Mein Weg: Jamal al-Khatib This video tells the story of a fictional young man, who fled to Austria as a child. The 'Jamal' project is run by young Muslims who want to take a stance against religiously inspired extremism. Supported by a team of youth workers and other experts, the team produced a series of videos which tell the story of Jamal. Jamal discusses the frustrations he experiences and questions Islamic identity, providing an alternative to extremist ideology. The videos tell stories taken straight from the young people's lives. After watching it, support the group to identify key words from the list above that it seeks to address and demystify.

GUESS WHO GAMESHOW – LOOKING BEYOND YOUR BIAS

Aim	To support young people to learn about their conscious and unconscious bias, the filters through which they see the world. This game will help young people identify bias around race, gender, culture and how this can lead to discrimination and segregation.
Group Size	6-8 young people
Time	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Two tables and enough chairs for the groups to sit separately. You will need a board, flip chart or wall that the whole group can see.
Preparation	Stick the images up where all young people can see them. Hand out the descriptions to each group.
Resources	Print out the images large enough for the groups to see them. Print out two sets of the descriptions ideally on different coloured paper. Blu Tack. Coloured paper.
Activity	Split the group into teams of 3-4, the facilitator needs to create a 'gameshow' setting (acting skills required!). Explain that the aim of the game is to match the descriptions with the pictures. Encourage the group to discuss their thoughts together and collectively agree on their decision. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Point to the first picture and ask the teams to confer and then decide on the description that related to that image. After a couple of minutes say gameshow type quotes such as; 'I'm going to have to push you on this' and 'is that your final answer?' The facilitator should make notes of key words they hear through the young people's conversations to refer to when unpicking the game at the end. 2. When the group have made their decision, take the answers from both teams and stick it up next to the image. Go through all the pictures using the same process. 3. When all descriptions have been matched with pictures start discussing them one by one and explore why they chose the image they did - for both the right and wrong answers, questions could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you choose that person for this description? • What influenced your decision to make that choice? • If young people are surprised that a description matched a picture, then ask why they think this might be. • Use probing questions to begin to explore the pre-judgements that young people had made. Be mindful of the choice of language and terminology that is used and challenge yourself and young people appropriately to think about the words that support prejudicial opinions.

THIS CAN BE USED FOR THE CORRECT ANSWERS

<p>Picture 1</p>  <p>Manal Al-Sharif</p>	<p>This person lived in Saudi Arabia where women were not allowed to drive. They wanted to change this. One day they borrowed their brother's car and posted a clip of them driving on YouTube so as many people could see it as possible. They said in the video "If men can drive, why can't women?" They were arrested. The video was watched by thousands of women and a few weeks later hundreds of brave Saudi women took to the streets with their cars. They were arrested again and continued to encourage women to drive.</p>
<p>Picture 2</p>  <p>Leyla Hussein</p>	<p>An award-winning campaigner of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and gender rights. They advocate that FGM is child abuse and we are failing young British girls.</p>
<p>Picture 3</p>  <p>Simone Biles</p>	<p>This person is an American gymnast. They are known as one of the greatest gymnasts of all time. They are a four-time World All Around Champion and four-time World Floor Champion. At the last Olympics in Rio, they won four gold medals.</p>
<p>Picture 4</p>  <p>Lana Lokteff</p>	<p>This person is a nationalist and YouTube personality who is part of the alt-right movement. They also host Radio 3Fourteen which promotes white identity and anti-migration.</p>
<p>Picture 5</p>  <p>Malala Yousafzai</p>	<p>This person stood up to the Taliban who forbid girls going to school. They wrote online 'Education is power for women. The Taliban are closing girls' schools because they don't want women to be powerful'. They were shot in the head by the Taliban for standing up against them. They were rushed to hospital and amazingly survived. They continued to be an activist for girls / womens' education, saying 'Let us pick up our books and pens. They are the most powerful weapons'.</p>
<p>Picture 6</p>  <p>Lily Madigan</p>	<p>At only 20 years old, this person is the first transgender person to hold public office as a women's officer in the British Labour Party. They came out as trans when they were 16. Despite the transphobic tweets they received, they are still determined to be the UK's first trans member of parliament.</p>
<p>Picture 7</p>  <p>Blair Cottrell</p>	<p>This person is a far-right extremist, they are the leader of the United Patriots Front, a far right nationalist group. They believe that different ideologies pollute national identity and pride.</p>
<p>Picture 8</p>  <p>Philip Emagawlie</p>	<p>This person is a computer scientist, they have been recognised by Time Magazine and won the Gordon Bell Prize for inventing the world's fastest computer.</p>

STORY BOX

Aim	This activity aims to enable young people to have a space where they can ask any question to help raise their awareness and understanding of the diversity represented within the group (culture, faith, clothing, traditions and practices etc.). When young people feel safe to ask questions and develop their minds about difference (cultural competency), they are less likely to be drawn to extremist views and beliefs.
Group Size	6-12 young people
Time:	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Chairs in a circle
Preparation	IMPORTANT: The facilitator sets this up as a safe exercise by outlining the following to the group: The purpose of the activity is to ask questions by posting them in the box. These are questions that you may feel uncomfortable asking face to face - perhaps due to fear of being naive or being seen as racist. It's important that you develop an inquisitive mind about difference and learn that asking questions is a positive not negative thing to do. Emphasise that by asking questions, young people are going to increase their knowledge about other people's cultures, faiths, traditions or experiences.
Resources:	A story box (a box with a slot for posting questions), same coloured pens and slips of paper.
Activity	The activity can be run as a standalone activity or as part of an existing session (see below for more details).
Standalone activity	<p>Support the group to think about how they will write their individual questions - using respectful language. Offer help if they have difficulty formulating their question. Examples of questions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does being black mean to you? • Have you been treated differently because of the colour of your skin? • Can anyone who moved to this country share their story? • Why do you wear a turban? • How long have you had dreadlocks for? • Why do you wear a cross around your neck? • What languages do people speak in this room? • Do your tattoos mean something to you? • Have you been discriminated against identifying as trans? • Do people treat you differently because of where you live?
As part of a session	<p>If this method is chosen as the best way to engage with the group then invite them to sit in a circle and explain the process, and ask young people to post questions in the box that is placed in the centre of the circle. After questions have been posted, the facilitator is to read the questions out one by one and encourage those individuals that feel comfortable to respond. It may be obvious sometimes who the question is directed at i.e. if the question identifies a piece of clothing (turban, hijab), it would be ideal if those individuals have the opportunity to share why wearing them is important to them.</p> <p>NB: Facilitators may choose to 'screen' the statements before they read them out to ensure that none are of a racist / homophobic nature. If a young person asks why theirs wasn't read out then invite them to come and discuss with you after the activity and use it as an opportunity to discuss your reservations with them to promote learning, ideally helping them to re-write their question for the next session.</p> <p>Alternatively, these questions can be explored, further demonstrating to young people that this is a safe space for open dialogue and free speech, but choosing to support the group to identify how language and words can have impact. It is a good opportunity to create spaces to reframe and choose alternative language as a group that might reframe questions for safer exploration.</p> <p>The risks of screening are that young people do not feel that their views are being heard, and they may be forced to seek and share their opinions in spaces where they feel validated, increasing the risk of polarity and extremist viewpoints.</p> <p>Place the box anywhere in your session and inform young people what the purpose of it is. Encourage young people to write their questions and then allow time at the end of the session for those who took part to come together and go through the same process as written above. For some young people, formulating and writing their questions whilst on a break from a normal activity may feel less threatening and encourage those that may not often participate to get involved.</p>

AGREE / DISAGREE CONTINUUMS

Aim	The aim of this activity is to ascertain what young people think about issues specifically related to extremist narratives. It will support young people to express their thoughts and opinions in a safe environment. It will also enable young people to become more informed about issues, as workers can help raise awareness through discussion promoted during the activity. Young people can also support each other's views and the development of different opinions through the safe boundaries and space that has been created collaboratively with the youth worker.
Group Size	6-12 young people
Time:	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Line up five chairs in a row, space them out, so there is room between them.
Preparation	Read through the statements and think of some responses to help provoke the conversation.
Resources:	Print out the statements below.
Activity	<p>The first chair represents 'Disagree' and the last chair represents 'Agree'. Read out the statements and ask the young people to stand.</p> <p>Read the statements out one by one (some of them may feel uncomfortable) and ask young people to stand by the chair that best represents their views. When young people have stood by their chosen chairs then facilitate a group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why have you chosen to stand there? • What would change your mind to move up? • Where have you got the information from that has helped form your opinion? <p>STATEMENTS:</p> <p><i>Someone born with male genitalia should be allowed to use a Ladies public toilet if they are transgender.</i></p> <p><i>Trans people should not be allowed to serve in the armed forces.</i></p> <p><i>It would be safer for our country to stop refugees coming in.</i></p> <p><i>A gay couple should not be able to adopt babies.</i></p> <p><i>Bakers should be allowed to refuse to make a wedding cake for a gay couple.</i></p> <p><i>I would prefer it if everyone around me spoke English.</i></p> <p><i>I know what signs to look out for if someone is trying to groom me.</i></p> <p><i>Refugees are costing the NHS millions.</i></p> <p><i>People who are not British citizens should not receive free medical treatment.</i></p> <p><i>Adults with learning difficulties should be allowed / encouraged to have sex.</i></p> <p><i>You should have to be able to speak English fluently to get a job in this country.</i></p> <p><i>The NHS should not give free support to alcoholics or drug users.</i></p> <p><i>I feel safer if everyone on the train is speaking English.</i></p> <p><i>The biggest problem with the benefits system is that too many people pretend to be sick or unable to work.</i></p> <p><i>There is a housing crisis in this country because of refugees and asylum seekers.</i></p> <p><i>Gay people are too easily offended by jokey name-calling or banter.</i></p> <p><i>Asylum Seekers are claiming benefits that could be going to people born in this country.</i></p> <p><i>It should not be a crime to call someone a racist term.</i></p> <p><i>Muslims want to enforce Sharia Law in this country.</i></p> <p><i>The government should not ban political groups that promote racist ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Freedom of Speech means we should be able to publicly say anything about any group of people.</i></p> <p><i>We should be able to stop people from specific countries or religions coming into this country.</i></p> <p><i>White British people are more likely to be racist than others.</i></p> <p><i>The threat of terrorism makes me less likely to fly / use public transport / go to big cities.</i></p> <p><i>In an ideal world people would only have romantic / sexual relationships with people from the same ethnic background as them.</i></p> <p><i>It is okay to pay women less if they get paid to take time off to have a baby.</i></p> <p><i>The burkha should be banned in public places, as we need to see who is underneath.</i></p>



FACTS VERSUS INTERPRETATION

Aim	The aim of this activity is to explore the differences between the facts (what is known), and assumed interpretation / bias. It will help young people to identify that bias and interpretation are influenced by experiences and not always reflective of evidenced truths.
Group Size	10-15 young people
Time:	50-60 minutes
Room Layout	Circle formation with chairs.
Preparation	Knowledge of the group and any physical, learning or emotional difficulties or differences.
Resources:	Pens and paper.
Activity	<p>When the group is all seated, perform some actions without speaking; for example – walk out of the room and re-enter, drum your fingers, check your watch as examples. Make eye contact with group members as you do this.</p> <p>Come back to your seat within the group.</p> <p>Distribute the paper and pens to young people. Ask participants to make two columns: 'FACTS' and 'INTERPRETATION'.</p> <p>Ask them to complete the table with what they saw you do. For example, fact might be 'leave the room and re-enter'. Interpretation may be 'looked nervous, was checking for something'.</p> <p>Once this is completed, ask the participants to share their findings, and facilitate discussions around the differences between the two columns, and what this might mean.</p> <p>Encourage the group to identify differences between facts and thoughts, and interpretation.</p> <p>Ask questions to create critical dialogue; explore what are definite and what might lead to biases.</p> <p>To extend this activity you can link this to wider known prejudices; for example, women's roles in employment, and the differences between what we know from our own experiences, and what we have been influenced in through different sources.</p>

Activity Theme 2:

Nurturing a positive self-identity

GLOBAL COMMUNITY – STORY OF WHERE YOU COME FROM.

Aim	This activity is to support the group to learn about each other's birth places and where they have grown up. It will help develop group bonds and encourage young people to learn about each other's cultural heritage.
Group Size	6 young people (maximum)
Time	45 minutes
Room Layout	Table and chairs or beanbags.
Preparation	Pin a world map onto a large pin board. Ensure there is space around the map so that young people can pin their post-it notes around the map. Alternatively, you can purchase a pre-made world map pin board.
Resources	A large world map, pins, scissors, string, sticky notes & pens.
Activity	<p>Keep the group small so all can actively participate in the activity. The same map can be used for several groups to build up a visual image of the diversity and cultural heritage represented within your centre.</p> <p>Explain that the activity is to deepen everyone's understanding of where individuals were born and raised. One by one ask participants to locate their place of birth on the map and visually mark it with a pin and then describe what that area is like and if comfortable share one memory attached to it. If young people were born in one country and then moved to the UK, ask them to place one pin in each location. Tie a piece of string around the pin and pull it to the outer edges of the map where it meets a sticky note, making a kind of arrow. On this note, young people can write the location / name / and a memory if they feel comfortable. Repeat this for each young person, so all group members can hear each other's stories. At the end of the activity reflect on key elements asking questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you find that process? • Was there anything that you found surprising? • Is there anything you would like to know more about? <p>Be aware of potential emotional challenges with this activity, if any group members are adopted, fostered or potentially have had to move and flee for safety issues (domestic abuse, war etc.).</p>



YOUR MUSIC

Aim	<p>Music is a powerful medium and something that many young people relate to. It often becomes a vehicle of self-expression and identity and can help groups come together.</p> <p>The aim of this activity is to give young people an opportunity to play their chosen track to the group and explain why it means something to them, why it is their favourite and why they have chosen it.</p>
Group Size	A minimum of 6 young people
Time	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Create a relaxed space for young people to participate in this activity.
Preparation	Advise young people to bring their favourite track, also be willing to share yours.
Resources	Speaker & connecting lead (if needed) so young people can plug in their phone.
Activity	<p>Invite young people to think about the track they would like to play to the group (dependent on group size this may be all of the track or part of it) and ask them to share why they chose that particular song and what it means to them.</p> <p>It may relate to the artist, or some key words in the song or how the music is layered etc.. Encourage the group to be open minded as they are likely to listen to different 'genres' and artists. Ask group members to play their music and describe why they relate to it.</p> <p>Facilitate discussion with the rest of the group to enable learning and appreciation of how people connect with different types of music.</p>

FRAME IT

Aim	For young people to learn about key events and experiences that have shaped their lives. This supports the group to look beyond initial impressions and gain a deeper knowledge of other group members, appreciating how experiences can help shape them as individuals.
Group Size	9-12 young people
Time	30 minutes
Room Layout	Create a large floor space for groups to develop their freeze frames together.
Preparation	<p>NOTE: Facilitators need to ensure that this activity is safe for young people by facilitating a discussion with the group before the activity e.g.:</p> <p><i>This activity requires you to be honest about a life shaping experience. Please make sure that you only 'frame' things that you are comfortable to share with the group. If you want to talk about your frame with the facilitator after the activity you are more than welcome. Also, as you are watching people's freeze frame, please show respect by remaining focussed and refrain from using laughter or exaggerated facial expressions as a response to what you are watching'.</i></p>
Resources	Nothing is required
Activity	<p>Split the group into threes. Encourage individuals to share their experiences with others in their group to enable them to create their individual freeze frame that represents it.</p> <p>Everyone in the group should share and create their own freeze frame.</p> <p>Facilitate the activity by asking which group would like to go first and counting them down.</p> <p>"3, 2, 1 freeze". Groups are then to show their freeze frames to the rest of the group for a period of 8-10 seconds.</p> <p>After each freeze frame, the individual whose frame it was can describe why it was a defining experience for them (examples may vary in nature such as: graduation, passing a driving test, climbing a mountain, to deeper experiences such as being in care, a violent incident, a family member leaving).</p> <p>If the individual whose frame it is, is happy to be asked a couple of questions by the wider group then this can be facilitated sensitively. If not, then this must be respected, and the next freeze frame acted out.</p>

GET IT HEARD

'If I can express my views, it means the space I am in is open to accepting me' (adapted from Salto-Youth)

Aim	This activity supports young people to think about what they are passionate about in life and challenges them to express it in a loud and upfront way in front of a group of people (club members, youth workers, peers). It aims for young people to find their voice and increase their confidence in expressing it publicly. Often when young people are encouraged to express their thoughts and opinions, they adopt them as part of their identity and experience.
Group Size	A minimum of 6 young people
Time	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Large open space.
Preparation	Prepare what you would like to share.
Resources	A microphone and speaker / a large space. If you can source a megaphone, this itself can symbolise the power of young people's voices.
Activity	<p>Explain to the group that this activity is about finding and expressing your voice in a safe and non-judgemental space. Encourage the young people to spend some time thinking / writing something that describes them - this could be linked to their passions, their faith or their family for example. Young people must include one thing they are proud of and one thing they would like to overcome, everything else is up to them.</p> <p>Ensure that every young person receives a round of applause from the group after they have spoken. To start the activity, it would be good if the facilitator went first. This helps set a safe space. Ensure there is a lot of space between the microphone and the group.</p> <p>NB: If there are members of the group that find this activity too challenging then offer alternatives to get their voice heard i.e. not using a microphone initially / expressing themselves to a smaller group with the aim of building it up to a bigger group. It's important this doesn't become an alienating activity for young people with low confidence / self-esteem. The facilitators would need to build in smaller steps to make this achievable.</p>



AFFIRMATION CIRCLE

Aim	For individuals to have the opportunity to hear positive affirmations from their peers / youth workers. Affirmation (at any stage in life) can help increase individuals' confidence / self-belief and identity, however, it needs to be delivered in a safe and constructive way.
Group Size	6-15 young people
Time	20-30 minutes
Room Layout	Room layout may differ depending on how you choose to deliver the activity.
Preparation	Preparation may differ depending on how you choose to deliver the activity.
Resources	Coloured card cut into squares (affirmation cards), pens. Resources differ depending on how you choose to deliver the activity.
Activity	<p>This activity can be delivered in various ways that suit the context and the needs of young people you are working with. For some young people, sitting in a group and hearing positive affirmations may be a really positive experience, whilst others may find it too difficult and respond with anger and / or withdraw from the activity, as it challenges deep negative beliefs they have about themselves.</p> <p>Ideas of how to deliver this activity-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the group to sit in a circle and one at a time choose someone in the circle to say something positive about. The person hearing the affirmation must always respond with a 'thank you' (this helps the person to accept what they are hearing). Affirmations can be about anything positive. Facilitators can take part, they need to ensure that everyone has received an affirmation and facilitate this process. Ask young people to decorate their own affirmation box / container, with their name included on it. Over the next few sessions, ensure these affirmation boxes are out, so that individuals can write affirmations in their own time and post them in individuals' boxes. Young people can decide whether to anonymise their affirmation card. After a few sessions, young people can take their own affirmation box and read at their leisure. NB: Facilitators are to remind young people to write their affirmations as the session is in progress and also be clear that they will be 'screening' the affirmations that are written to avoid any negative or potential abusive messages ending up in an individual's box. Alternatively, if there are peer leaders in the group, they could be supported to screen as a more youth-led process. Get creative - the group will design an affirmation board. Get a large plain sheet of paper and ask young people what symbol they would like to be painted on it, once it has dried they will pin their affirmations to it. Images may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a tree (affirmation cards could be the leaves) huge headphones (affirmation cards could be music notes) a rainbow to represent the diversity within the group (affirmation cards could be clouds) Young people can choose any symbol to display the cards in a visual and creative way. The sheet can then be displayed in a space shared by the young people. If this approach is used in detached work, displaying on a moveable board or a virtual space.

LOOKING UP – ROLE MODEL ACTIVITY

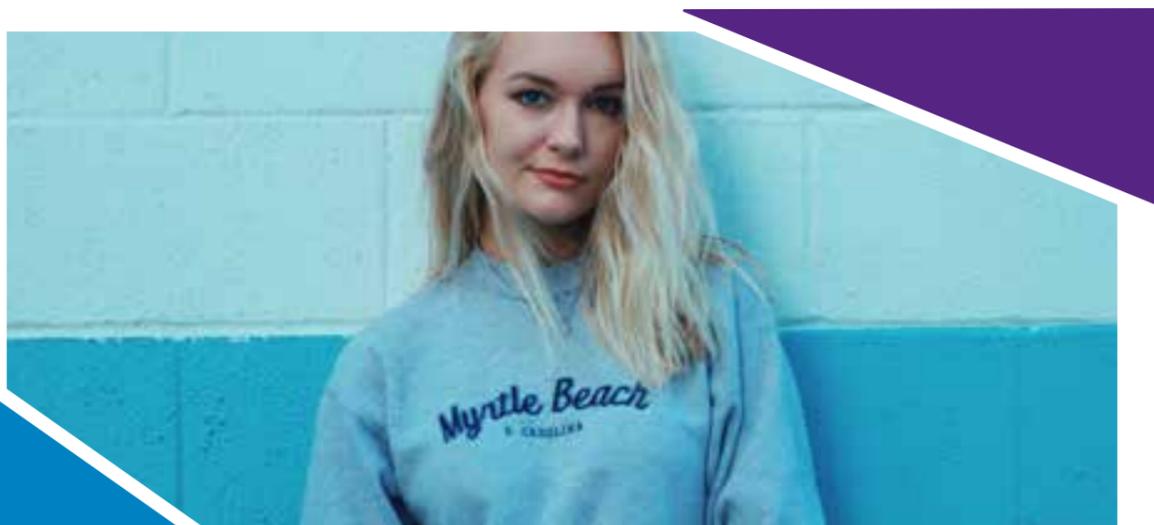
Aim	To support young people to think about who their role models are and why. Having positive role models helps develop positive self-identity and esteem and reduces the risk of young people being exploited. It will also help facilitators identify which young people struggle with this activity to help inform future work with them.
Group Size	8- 10 young people
Time	45 minutes
Room Layout	Ensure the room / space is big enough to display the six 'Life Spheres'.
Preparation	Always useful for you to have some examples.
Resources	Flip chart paper, pens. Handout copies of the support wheel for the young people to complete. They can start to identify their role models and people they may turn to.
Activity	<p>Mark 6 'Life Spheres' on large circles and pin them up around the room. 'Life Spheres' are family / friends / school / work / culture (music, art, sport) / spirituality.</p> <p>Ask young people to take some time and work their way around the life spheres and write their role model's name(s) related to that sphere on their support wheel. Emphasise that they only have to write names on spheres they can relate to.</p> <p>Supporting young people to physically move into the 'Life Spheres' areas to complete their support wheel, ensures this activity becomes an active and reflective process for young people. Youth Workers could be present in each sphere to help young people think about their spheres and who is a positive influence for them within it.</p> <p>After young people have written names, then facilitate some group discussion to bring the activity to life.</p> <p>Suggestions for this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take each sphere one at a time and ask young people what name(s) they wrote on their support wheel and why? Other questions may include: • What is it about them that you would like to be like? • Give an example where you have been impressed with how your role model has dealt with a situation. • Would anyone like to share a personal experience of their relationship with their role model? • What sphere has the least names written in and why do you think that is? What could be done to develop some positive role models in those spheres?

Activity Theme 3:

Developing a safe space for young people to express themselves and belong

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Aim	To support the group to get to know each other and for people to share their names and the story behind it. This activity is designed to support individuals to express their cultural heritage and identity related to it through their name.
Group Size	8-15 young people
Time	15 minutes
Room Layout	Circle of chairs.
Preparation	Always useful to have some examples.
Resources	Flip chart paper, pens.
Activity	<p>To set up activity, outline that they are going to ask individuals for their names to write on a flipchart.</p> <p>During this process, you need to facilitate an open conversation that promotes learning for individual participants around names and their meaning and pronunciation (where needed).</p> <p>Prompt questions to use during activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your name? • Is there a literal translation of your name? If so, what is it? • Is that important to you and why? (these questions help bring out individuals' stories behind their name) • How do you pronounce your name? • When people pronounce it differently how does that make you feel? • Do you feel able to express how you want your name to be articulated? • I have noticed you have shortened your name, is that because you like to be called that or for ease for other people? (If 'ease', then encourage that in your youth work setting people are committed to using names that people want to identify themselves by, to help promote a culture of identity, belonging and safety). If participants have Anglicised their name, e.g. 'My name is Sabaoth, but for ease I am called Seb', then openly discuss this. • Can I ask why you changed your name? • Does that name sit comfortably with you? • Would you like to be called your real name in this setting? – if 'yes' then encourage people to pronounce the name and if they are unsure, just to ask as opposed to resorting to the easier version. <p>* Anglicise – modifications made to foreign words, name and phrases to make them easier to spell, pronounce or understand in English.</p>



OUR SPACE, OUR COMMUNITY.

Aim	A simple exercise that encourages young people to discuss and explore what their youth space means to them. It enables practitioners to bring out conversations around what it means to create safe spaces where young people belong, feel supported and diversity is celebrated.
Group Size	6-10 young people
Time	30-45 minutes
Room Layout	Ensure the room is large enough for a sheet to be laid on top of newspaper on the floor and for young people to sit / lie down to paint on it.
Preparation	Sellotape newspaper to the floor to ensure that no paint seeps through. Place large sheets over newspaper as the canvas to be painted on.
Resources	Newspaper, large plain coloured sheet, paint brushes, paints, graffiti pens.
Activity	<p>Lay the large sheet over some newspaper and initiate conversation with young people and explain, 'This banner is going to represent what this space means to you / us and what key things need to be in place to make sure it is a safe, fun and a supportive space'.</p> <p>Encourage young people to think about key words and how they want to represent them on the banner- i.e. through pictures / words. As young people are taking part in this activity, promote discussion around what safe spaces look like and how to question this if it is challenged by individuals / groups. Equipping young people to promote the values of their club / group, increases ownership and the development of a safe space.</p> <p>Hang up the banner so it is a visual representation of what their youth space stands for. Actively promote new young people to add their art work / words to it so it becomes a meaningful and a live statement within your setting.</p>

THREE WORDS

Aim	A simple exercise that encourages young people to discuss and explore what their youth space means to them. It enables practitioners to bring out conversations around what it means to create safe spaces where young people belong, feel supported and diversity is celebrated.
Group Size	12 young people
Time	30 minutes
Room Layout	Ensure room is large enough for young people to move around and join into a larger group as the activity progresses.
Preparation	No preparation is required.
Resources	Pens and paper.
Activity	<p>This activity will support young people to collectively agree on three 'top' words that describe what 'belonging' means to them. It starts as an individual activity and then develops into a larger group activity as it progresses (NB: 'belonging' can be substituted for any word that helps promote the theme of identity and inclusion).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask them to individually write down three words that describe 'belonging' to them. Once everyone has written their three words ask them to share theirs with their group. Split the group into four groups of three and ask them to come up with their top three words to describe 'belonging' (this will involve individuals sharing their words and the group negotiating down to just three words). Once they have decided what these three words are, then ask them to join another group of three young people. (There will now be two groups of six young people) Advise the groups to listen to each other's three top words and then narrow the six words between the two groups, down to a joint three words. Finally bring the two groups of six young people (12 young people in total) together and ask them to narrow the six words (three from both groups) down to the final top three words.

Discussion After Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was that process? What was easy? What was challenging and why? What did you learn about belonging for others? Were there similarities / differences? What did you learn about belonging for yourself? Were there similarities / differences? Did your voice get heard or overlooked / drowned out? How did you manage any conflict? Are you happy with the group's final three words?
---------------------------	--

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

Aim	Food can be extremely powerful in creating a safe and informal space where people can build relationships, ask questions and share together. The aim of this activity is for the group to learn what food is important to each other and why.
Group Size	12 young people
Time	1.5-2 hours
Room Layout	Kitchen with equipment needed for cooking activity.
Preparation	<p>Ensure kitchen has the necessary pieces of equipment needed.</p> <p>A risk assessment needs to be written to ensure that health and safety issues have been considered and planned for during the activity.</p>
Resources	Ingredients from the recipe the group have decided to cook and eat together.
Activity	<p>In a group of six, promote a fun discussion about food and what it means to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you like food? What food is your favourite and why? If you had to choose just one dish what would it be? Do you like eating with your family / friends? Is there a story attached to your favourite food- i.e. a family story / or something you had at a special occasion one time? If you could choose a dish that you would like someone else to try what would that be? <p>Support the group to share their food stories and then collectively decide on a dish they would all try cooking together.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you can support the group to go shopping for the ingredients together this can be a powerful experience as it opens up opportunities for young people to go into shops they may have not been in before and gain confidence in looking for ingredients from other cultures they may have not tried. Support the individual whose recipe it is to describe the dish and delegate tasks to each group member, so everyone has a role. Whilst the group are cooking, actively encourage discussion around food bringing out the similarities and differences and how culture and traditions can impact this. Eat together- this is the best bit! Again, promote discussion around the meal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you find cooking the dish? Are there ingredients you haven't tried before? On a scale of 1-10 how much do you like it? (1 being not at all, 10 being super delicious) Do you think you may try to cook this at home? Wash up together! <p>Facilitate discussions around how food can bring people together, and try to make reference to the shared aspects of belonging and commonality that have emerged through conversation and dialogue.</p> <p>Accept and encourage challenge through these conversations, this is a positive that shows your space is deemed to be a safe one for open dialogue.</p>

CREATING CHANGE

Aim	This activity is to support young people to identify changes they would like to make or have an influence over in their community / town / city / world. It encourages young people to be active social agents of change and to dream big.
Group Size	8-12 young people
Time	1-2 hours
Room Layout	This will be dependent on the activity the young people decide on - see below.
Preparation	Watch the videos below as inspiration to help facilitate the group of young people you are working with to generate some interesting and creative ideas!
Resources	This will depend on how the group chooses to express the changes they would like to make.
Activity	<p>Support a group of young people to identify what changes they would like to make locally and / or nationally / globally, and to collectively agree how they would like to express this.</p> <p>To help inject some enthusiasm into this project, provide your group of examples of young people that have influenced positive change. A good resource for this is 'Stories for Kids who dare to be different' - Ben Brooks, and also the videos below.</p> <p>During this activity, facilitate conversations with young people about the changes they want to make and why. Support them with the process of how they may go about making the change / where they need support / how can they do it together etc..</p> <p>Ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a short video for YouTube / other social media platforms. See Integrate UK's video. • Create a storyboard. • Making a large papier-mâché globe as a group, identifying what positive changes and influence the group would like to have. • This installation can then be displayed in your centre.
Supportive Resources	<p>Integrate UK - A cheeky but very meaningful song by the young people of Integrate UK, making it very clear that no form of FGM is acceptable. YouTube: #MyClitoris</p> <p>Malala Yousafzai - Standing up for girls education. YouTube: The story of Malala Yousafzai</p> <p>Lily Madigan - At 20, Lily Madigan was elected as a Women's Officer in the Labour party in 2017. YouTube: Lily Madigan</p> <p>Greta Thunberg - Is the 16-year-old whose refusal to go to school because of climate change led to children around the world skipping classes to protest. https://preview.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/teenage-climate-activist-greta-thunberg-tells-extinction-rebellion-supporters-humanity-is-at-a-crossroads/vi-BBwk79G</p>

FRISBEE IT

Aim	For the group to identify words that help create a safe space through a game that is easy and fun to facilitate.
Group Size	8-12 young people
Time	10-15 minutes
Room Layout	Ideally an outdoor large space. However, if this is not possible then a large indoor space will work.
Preparation	No preparation is required.
Resources	Frisbee.
Activity	<p>This is a short and fun activity where young people come up with a word that describes what a safe space / community is for them. They all choose their word and tell the group. The idea is for the group to remember each other's words, they then throw the frisbee to someone whilst saying their chosen word. If the young person gets it wrong, it doesn't matter, the more the frisbee is thrown around the group the easier it will become to remember individuals chosen words. As words are spoken aloud it can help give meaning to them and create a strong group identity and safe space.</p> <p>To mix the game up a little, you could suggest to the group that the circle size starts small and as the game progresses the circle could get bigger and the frisbee throwing becomes a little bit more of a challenge.</p>

ALL THAT WE SHARE

Aim	The aim of this activity is to highlight our common shared human experiences that transcends culture / faith / race.
Group Size	A minimum of 6 young people
Time	10-15 minutes
Room Layout	Large space.
Preparation	No preparation is required.
Resources	List of shared experiences below to be read out.
Activity	<p>Invite the group to stand in a circle.</p> <p>If it is a new group, ask everyone to introduce themselves by their name.</p> <p>Explain that the aim of the game is to highlight our shared experiences and to help bring the group together.</p> <p>Explain that you have a set of experiences you will read through one by one and if that is something the young people have experienced or can identify with, then ask them to take a couple of steps into the middle of the circle.</p> <p>Some statements may see only one person stepping in, whilst others will see a few.</p> <p>When people have stepped in, ask individuals if they would like to briefly describe their experience to bring them to life. However, ensure that responses are brief.</p> <p>Statements start off light and get deeper as the game progresses.</p> <p>Shared experiences to be read out (feel free to add your own):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family is important to me. 2. Having good friends is important to me. 3. I remember my first kiss. 4. I like to wear Nike trainers. 5. I have argued with my Mum (or another key family member) numerous times! 6. I have a brother or sister. 7. I like school. 8. I hate school. 9. I think about food a lot! 10. I have some things I regret doing. 11. I want to travel when I'm older. 12. I have been bullied at some time in my life. 13. I support (choose a football team). 14. I have experienced depression / and or anxiety in my life. 15. I like going to the gym to keep fit. 16. I sometimes feel 'stuck' in life. 17. I have days where I don't like my body. 18. I have experienced being discriminated against. 19. I feel confident to achieve some of my dreams. 20. I worry about money quite a lot. 21. I enjoy wearing make-up. 22. I enjoy live music.

Activity Handout:

All on the same page –
pairing exercise



Extremist	Radicalisation
Ideology	Extremist vulnerabilities
Anti-Semitic	Xenophobia
Hate Crime	Propaganda
Prejudice	Discrimination
Sexism	Homophobia
	Transphobia

Activity Handout:

All on the same page –
pairing exercise



A person who holds extreme personal, political or religious views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action.

The process where someone's vulnerabilities (e.g. loneliness, mental health issues, personal experience of hate crime) are used (exploited) to draw people into crime or acts of hatred.

Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.

Being treated less favourably because of a characteristic like age, gender, race or religion.

The process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

A system of ideas and ideals

Fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners, or of anything that is strange or foreign.

Hostility to or prejudice against Jews.

A crime, typically one involving violence, that is motivated by prejudice on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, or other grounds.

Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

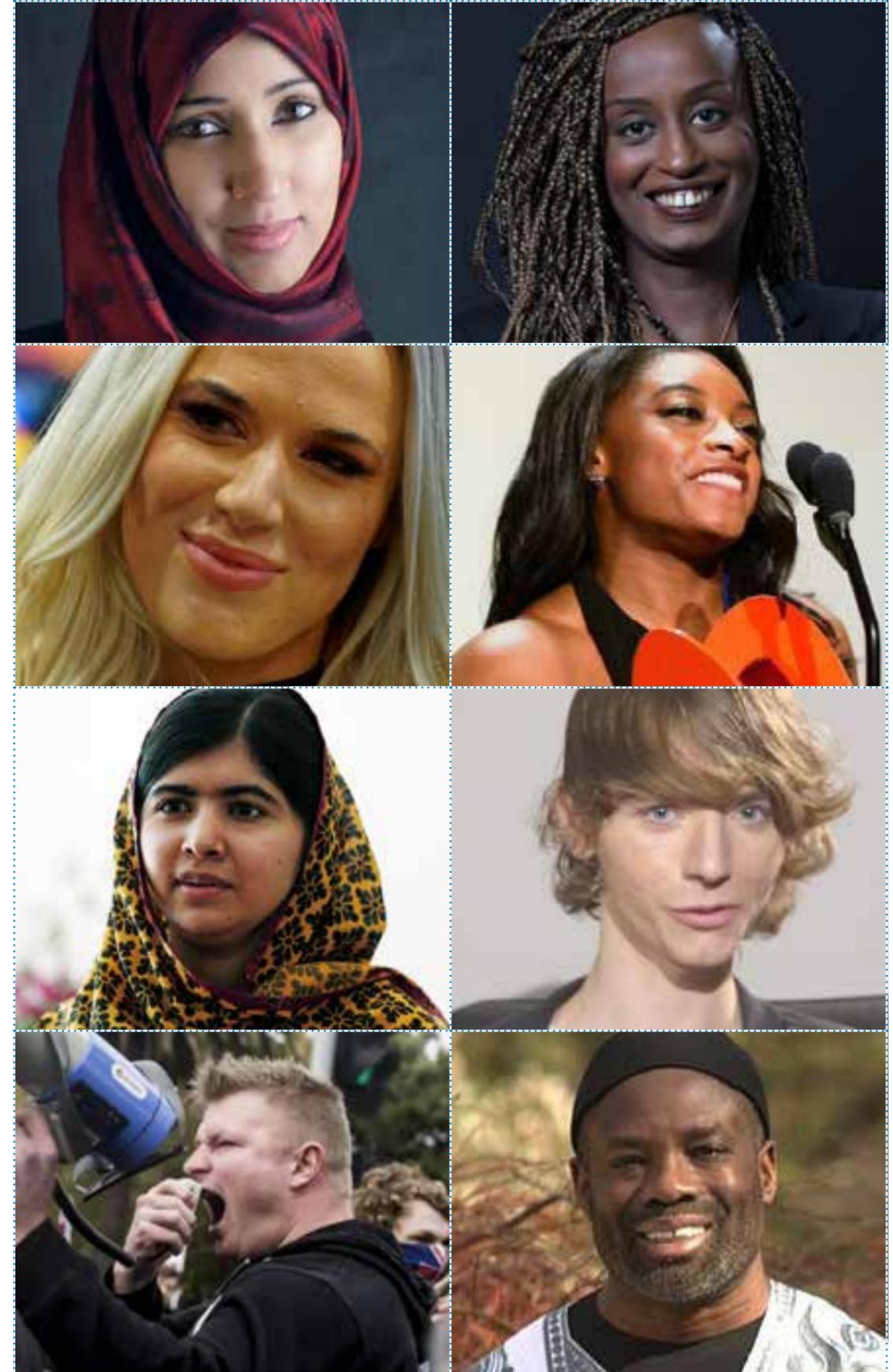
Prejudice or ill treatment of a person based on their gender (sex).

Prejudice or ill treatment of a person based on their sexuality.

Prejudice or ill treatment of a transgender person.

Activity Handout:

Guess Who Gameshow —
looking beyond your bias



Activity Handout:

Agree / Disagree Continuums



Statements:

Someone born with male genitalia should be allowed to use a Ladies public toilet if they are transgender.	It is okay to pay women less if they get paid to take time off to have a baby.
It would be safer for our country to stop refugees coming in.	The biggest problem with the benefits system is that too many people pretend to be sick or unable to work.
Bakers should be allowed to refuse to make a wedding cake for a gay couple.	A gay couple should not be able to adopt babies.
I know what signs to look out for if someone is trying to groom me.	I would prefer it if everyone around me spoke English.
People who are not British citizens should not receive free medical treatment.	Refugees are costing the NHS millions.
Adults with learning difficulties should be allowed / encouraged to have sex.	You should have to be able to speak English fluently to get a job in this country.
I feel safer if everyone on the train is speaking English.	Trans people should not be allowed to serve in the armed forces.
There is a housing crisis in this country because of refugees and asylum seekers.	The NHS should not give free support to alcoholics or drug users.
Asylum Seekers are claiming benefits that could be going to people born in this country.	The threat of terrorism makes me less likely to fly / use public transport / go to big cities.
Muslims want to enforce Sharia Law in this country.	The government should not ban political groups that promote racist ideas.
Freedom of speech means we should be able to publicly say anything about any group of people.	It should not be a crime to call someone a racist term.
White British people are more likely to be racist than others.	We should be able to stop people from specific countries or religions coming into this country.
The burkha should be banned in public places, as we need to see who is underneath.	Gay people are too easily offended by jokey name-calling or banter.
	In an ideal world people would only have romantic/sexual relationships with people from the same ethnic background as them.

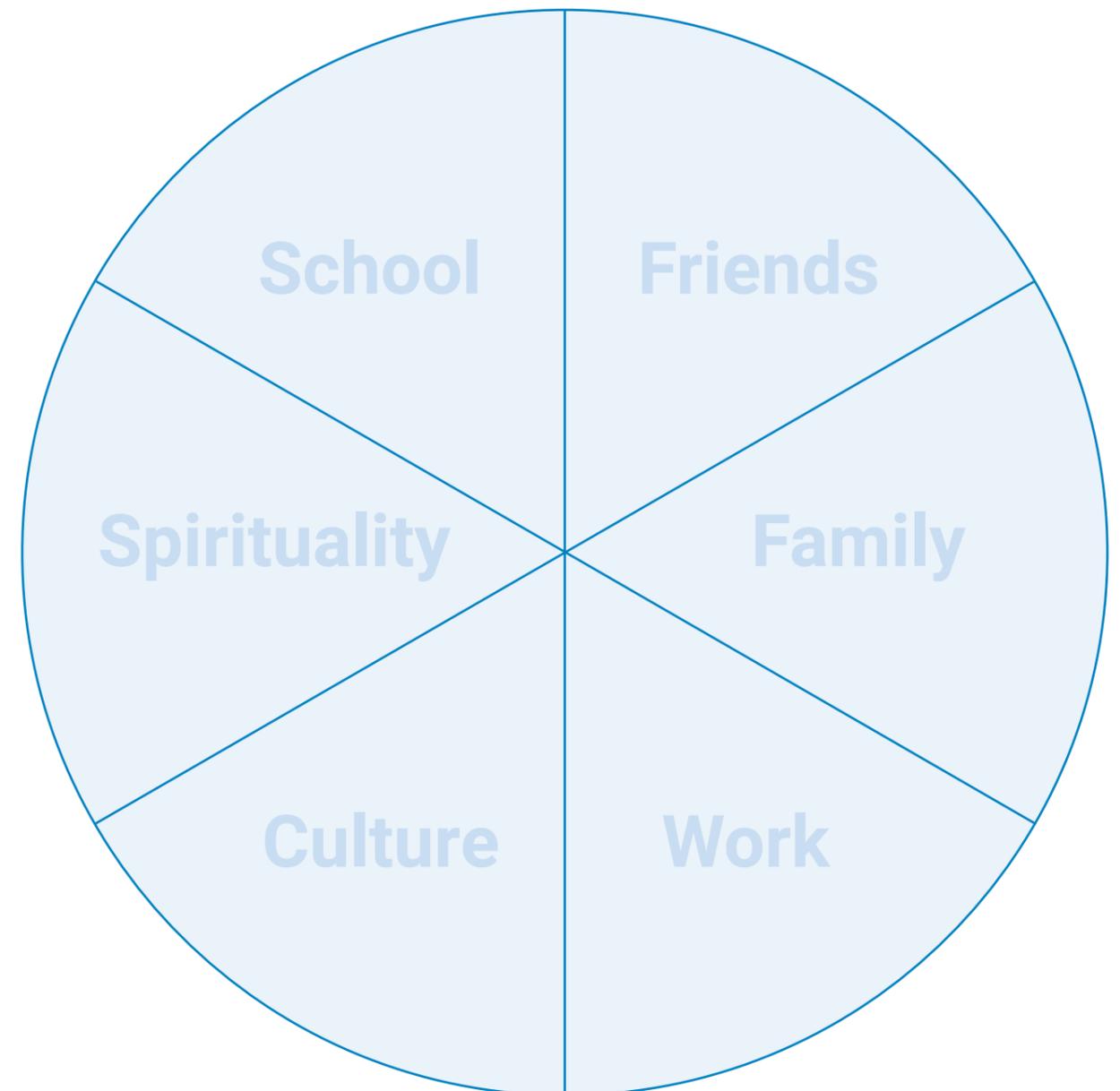
Activity Handout:

Looking up – Role Model Activity



This support wheel is designed for you to identify your role models in each section. Think about the people you look up to and who you turn to if you needed support.

It could be a friend, family member/s, an activist, a celebrity, a youth worker, teacher etc.. For those sections where you have less names in, think about what you could do to develop this. The more positive role models you have the better your own emotional and mental health will be!



Supporting Information & Organisations

TOPIC	ORGANISATION	FURTHER INFORMATION
Child at risk of extremism	UK Government Counter-Extremism Helpline	020 7340 7264 counter.extremism@education.gov.uk
Honour based violence	Karma Nirvana	karmanirvana.org.uk
Far right extremism	Hope not Hate	hopenohate.org.uk
Any prejudice	Anne Frank Trust	annefrank.org.uk
Transgender Support	Mermaids	mermaidsuk.org.uk
LGBTQ+ Support	Stonewall	stonewall.org.uk
Forced Marriage	Forced Marriage Unit	facebook.com/forcedmarriage
Female Genital Mutilation	NSPCC	nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm
Reporting extremist online material	UK Gov reporting service	report-terrorist-material.homeoffice.gov.uk/report
All extremism	Educate Against Hate	educateagainsthate.com
Reporting Hate Crime	True Vision	report-it.org.uk/home
Islamophobia	TellMAMA	tellmamauk.org/submit-a-report-to-us
Support for Asylum seekers / refugees	Refugee Council	refugeecouncil.org.uk
Bullying and Cyberbullying	NSPCC	nspcc.org.uk
Bullying of Disabled Children	Bullying UK	bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/advice-if-your-disabled-child-is-bullied

British Council & SALTO Youth (2017) 'Young People and Extremism Resource Packs for Youth Workers' [salto-youth.net/Young people and extremism pack for youth workers.pdf](http://salto-youth.net/Young%20people%20and%20extremism%20pack%20for%20youth%20workers.pdf)

British Council & SALTO Youth (2017) 'Young People and Extremism Resource Packs for Youth Workers - Additional Material' [salto-youth.net/SALTO Cultural Diversity Youth and Extremism-Additional Materials.pdf](http://salto-youth.net/SALTO%20Cultural%20Diversity%20Youth%20and%20Extremism-Additional%20Materials.pdf)

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (2017) 'The contribution of youth work to preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation' publications.europa.eu/en/publication



NYA
Youth Work
Academy



**BUILDING A STRONGER
BRITAIN TOGETHER**

The content of this booklet represents the views of our organisation and does not necessarily reflect the views of the BSBT programme or the Home Office.



[@nyaacademy](#)



nya.org.uk



**National Youth Agency
9 Newarke Street,
Leicester, LE1 5SN**