YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION

Social Action on Prevent Topics

About this resource

The aim of this resource is to provide guidance on working running social action projects related to prevent topics by sharing best practice examples, case studies, research and links to supporting organisations. We hope you use this resource as a tool to empower students to take action and have ownership of issues that are important to them. This resource can be used by staff or students to support youth social action projects.

This resource has been created as part of the Association of Colleges Youth Social Action Programme (Phase Three) by the Regional Enrichment Coordinator. The programme was originally funded through the #iwill Pears fund in partnership with the Pears Foundation, #iwill and the National Lottery. The Pears Foundation have continued to support the programme by funding a further two phases.

Find out more about the Youth Social Action Programme (Phase 3)



Bio



Florence Smith-Drayson is AoC's Regional Enrichment Coordinator and Youth Social Action Lead for Leeds City College.

Florence has been part of the Youth Social Action Programme since Phase One (2021-2023) and has been in a role dedicated to social action since 2021.

Youth Social Action

Definition

Youth social action refers to activities that you can do to make a positive difference to others or the environment.

There are lots of ways in which you can take practical action to make a positive difference. It can take place in a range of contexts and can mean formal or informal activities. These include volunteering, fundraising, campaigning or supporting peers.

Principles

What does great youth social action look like? Research suggests that high quality activities will meet six principles including:

1. Be youth-led
2. Be challenging
3. Have social impact
4. Allow progression to other opportunities
5. Be embedded in a young person's life
6. Enable reflection about the value of the activity

This definition and the principles come from #iwill, who champion social action in the UK.

The aim of social action is to empower young people to take action on issues that they care about and become active members of the community, so projects should be guided by them. Young people should build skills to take into the future to continue to act and create lasting habits.

Case Study

Shrewsbury College

#Proudtobe campaign

Youth Social Action Ambassador students on the Association of Colleges Youth Social Action Programme launched a #proudtobe campaign, which led to events across the college.

Dan Blasczyk, Student Engagement Coach at the college, worked with students on the project:
“After speaking to students, the initial idea put forward was to encourage students to bring in a flag of their choice which could be country of birth, ancestry, or religion and we could then get a big group photo of students to show how diverse we are. Several students then asked if they could hold a flag which represented their special educational needs, disability, gender, and sexuality.”

Students were invited to bring a flag and take a photo to celebrate their identity. Flags have been a big talking point across the country and the college proposes this as a way of challenging the narrative that people are not allowed to celebrate being British. The event offers the opportunity to celebrate all ancestry and history. Students also bring flags to represent other parts of their identity, such as pride flags.

The ambassadors promoted the campaign; they got hundreds of students involved and spoke to students about their flags.

This campaign turned into an annual celebration for staff and students, including bringing in flags and doing a Heritage Week, which the students get to share ideas for. They create display boards, help with a samosa sale for charity, set up crafts like a pebble painting activity and do African drumming with a local organisation.

Top tip from Shrewsbury College:
Listen to all students not just students in focus groups. Speak to students in the smoking areas and social spaces. The off the cuff feedback is sometimes the most useful





Turning conversations into action

Prevent is an area that is discussed in many tutorial sessions but also topics related to Prevent are brought up in safeguarding, wellbeing and enrichment. Once a topic has piqued interest of learners, it can be challenging to know how to direct the conversation into action. These exercises can support you to continue initial conversations.

Emotions

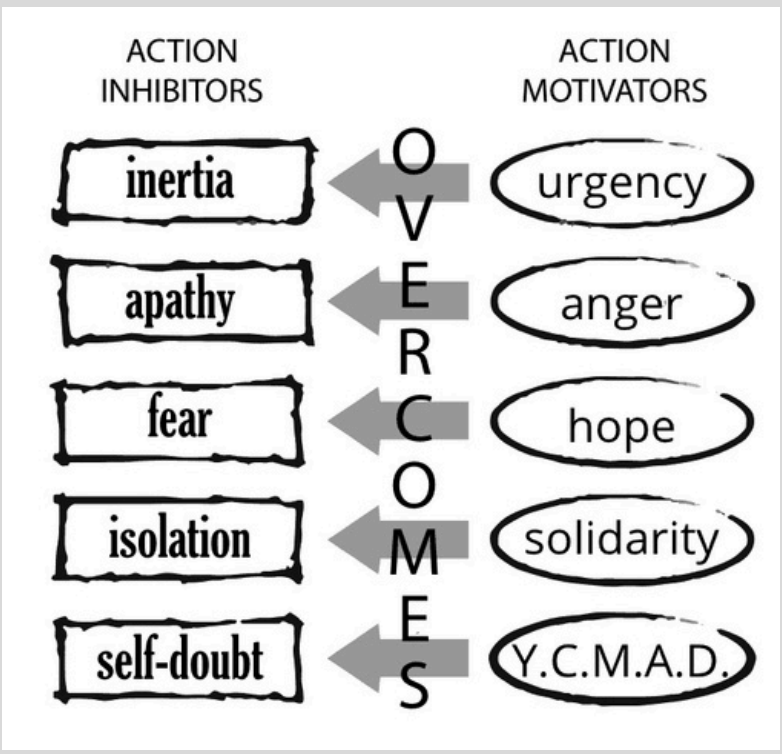
It is important to understand that values inspire action through emotions.

Activity

Ask your students: How does this make you feel?
Offer time to think about the issue and have quiet reflection.
Ask further questions:

- What comes to your mind?
- Where does your feeling sit?
- Are there words that describe how you feel?
- Are there any colours that reflect how you feel?

Discuss the emotions that come up.



(you can make a difference)

You, Your Community, Your World

Review how the issue affects everyone in the community. This could be done individually, in small groups or as a large group and can be done as a short activity or can be used to encourage further research on the topic.

Activity:

Ask students to write down how their issue affects them, the community eg. college, local area, social community, and the rest of the world.



Listening
Perform listening with the community to understand more about the issue, the impact and the potential solutions.

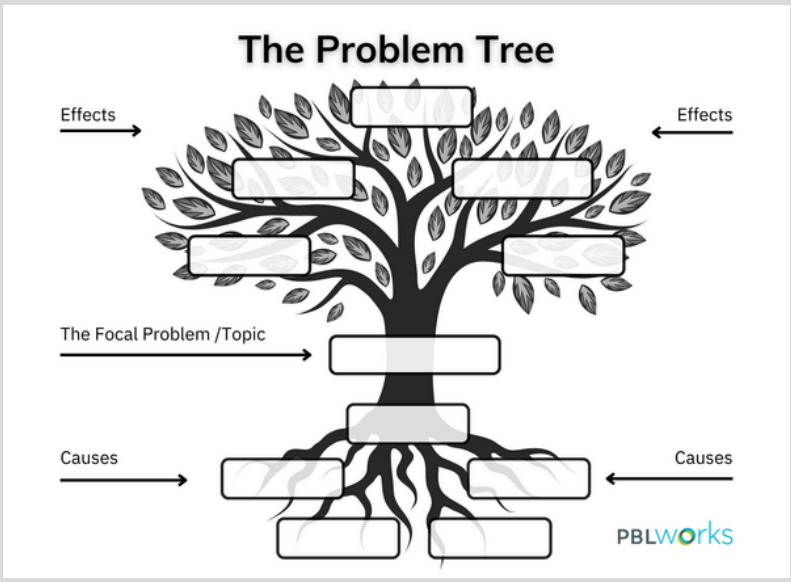
Listening can be performed through:

- Forms and surveys
- Listening groups
- Face-to-face conversations

Activity:
Ask students to decide who they want to ask, how they want to ask their questions and what they want to ask. Have them practice then plan a time they will work together to do their listening.

Problem tree
Review the causes and effects of the issue to help come up with project ideas.

Activity:
Ask students to fill in the tree with the problem in the middle, the causes at the bottom and the effects at the top. Discuss this and consider a actions that would address one of the causes or effects.



Resources

Relationships and Sex Education Toolkit including the Flag !t campaign

Educate Against Hate resources

Jo Cox Foundation - The Great Get Together

Refugee Week resources

Solidarity Knows No Borders organising workbook

Anti racism movement workshop

Having good difficult conversations

Organising across difference - Citizens UK

Young People and Extremism resource pack

Anti Racism Language Guide

Community Organisations

Educate Against Islamophobia

Maslaha - Anti-racism organisation

Tell Mama

White Ribbon

End Violence Against Women

International Women's Day

Hope not Hate

ACT Early

[Connect Futures]

[Holocaust Memorial Day]

[Stop Hate UK]

[City of Sanctuary]

References

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