



4 ATTITUDES & OPINIONS - WHAT DO WE THINK?

OBJECTIVE:

To examine people's attitudes and opinions to young people in order to see how this affects their views on young people's needs.

METHODS:

i) Collage on young people

PREPARATION:

You will need

- A selection of newspapers and magazines (you could ask people to bring some with them)
- scissors
- glue
- pens
- copies of the 'Our Values' handout (see main section of training pack)

TIMING:

The exercise will take 1 hour approximately.

WHAT TO DO:

Divide into groups of 6-8. Inform people their task is to produce a collage which sums up what they think about young people. Give people half an hour to do this.

Bring people back together and:

- Stick the collages up on the wall and ask a representative from each group to highlight the main message/s they are putting across.

- Lead a discussion around the following points:
Are young people really like this? Do the collages say more about us and our values than they do about young people?
- Give out the 'Our Values' handout and go through this. Ask for some answers to the three questions on the sheet, focussing specifically on the question - 'How do your values affect your work with young people.'

ii) What I Think About Young People - Questionnaire

PREPARATION:

You will need copies of a questionnaire on 'What I think about young people'. An example of one is provided but you may want to change some or all of the questions to make them more applicable to your society.

You will also need copies of the 'Our Values' handout.

TIMING:

The exercise will take about 1 hour.

WHAT TO DO:

Hand out copies of the questionnaire and give people 5 minutes to complete it on their own

Divide people into groups of 3-4 and ask them to discuss their answers for 25 minutes.

Bring the whole group back together and ask them for some feedback on their discussions. You could start off by asking 'were there any disagreements?' and explore what these were. Take about 15 mins for this.

Give out the 'Our Values' handout and go through this. Refer back to the Questionnaire during this discussion. The answers people gave will give an indication of some of their values. Spend most time on the final question - "How do our values affect our work with young people?"

iii) What I Think About Young People - Discussion Topics

PREPARATION:

You will need to have prepared a number of discussion topics. The

questions in the questionnaire. 'What I think about young people', could be used here. You will also need copies of the 'Our Values' handout.

TIMING:

The exercise will take 45 minutes approximately.

WHAT TO DO:

Divide into 4 groups.

Give each group two discussion topics and tell them they have 15 minutes to discuss the two topics.

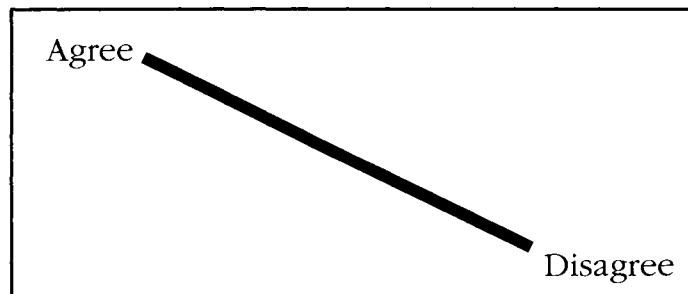
Bring the whole group back together and ask representatives from each group to sum up the range of opinions on each of their topics.

Give out the 'Our Values' handout and go through this. Refer back to the opinions which came out during the discussions - these will give an indication of people's values. Spend most time on the final question - How do our values affect our work with young people?

iv) What I Think About Young People - The Opinion Game

PREPARATION:

You will need a set of cards and an agree/disagree continuum for each group. Each card should have a separate statement written on it. You could use the statements used in the Questionnaire 'What do I think about young people.' Each group should have the same set of statements. The agree/disagree continuum can be drawn on a large sheet of newsprint e.g.



You will also need a copy of the 'Our Values' handout.

TIMING:

The exercise will take 1.5 hours approx.

WHAT TO DO:

Divide people into groups. Maximum of 8 people. Minimum of 5.

Explain the process. The Opinion Game briefing sheet outlines this. It is helpful for each group to have a copy of this.

Give people half to three quarters of an hour to discuss the cards. After this time ask each group to spend 10 minutes reflecting on their discussions - what do they think about young people?

Bring everyone together and ask for some feedback:

- a) on any points where there were disagreements; and
- b) what they think of young people

Give out the 'Our Values' handout and go through this. Refer back to the Opinion Game discussions. The views people expressed will give an indication of their values. Spend most time on the final question - "How do our values affect our work with young people?"

OUR VALUES

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY VALUES?

A value is something that is desirable or has worth. To value something is to rate it highly.

For example, if you are religious you may value the comments made to you by a church minister. If you are an atheist then those same comments may have a lot less value.

In this sense we may say that values are those things that show how a person has decided to live their life. Values influence and guide how people behave.

* What things, people, opinions, etc. do you value?

WHERE DO VALUES COME FROM?

We all have our own values but where have these come from? Sometimes it is difficult to trace the things that have influenced us.

It could be families, school, work, friends, the media, etc.

* Who/what has influenced your values?

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

It is important to try and work out your personal values. Whether you are aware of them or not they still affect your thoughts and your behaviour. They also affect how you relate to other people. When working with young people the values we hold may sometimes help or hinder us in our work.

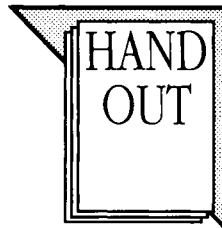
* How do your values affect your work with young people?

THE OPINION GAME - Briefing Sheet

- 1 Each group will have a set of cards and an agree/disagree sheet.
- 2 Each person in turn should pick up a card, read it out and place it where they think it should go on the agree/disagree continuum. They should give reasons explaining why they have placed it in that position.
- 3 After this other people can say where they would have placed the card. You can spend time discussing the different opinions but only the person who put the card down can move it.

When you are ready move on to the next card.

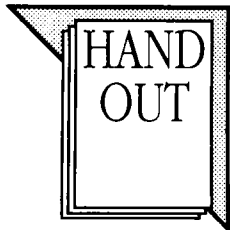
- 4 NB. This sometimes works best when the group is involved in lots of movement. You can use the whole room or space available. Take two chairs and put one at each end of the room. Label one “strongly disagree” and the other “strongly agree”. Your line is the imaginary straight line between the two chairs. To place their cards people have to move and place them, creating speculation, anticipation and a focus of attention.



WHAT I THINK ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

(Before completing the questionnaire, the group should decide what age they are referring to, e.g. Young People aged 14-16, Young People aged 18.)

	Agree strongly	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Disagree strongly
1 Things are much better for young people today than they were 20 years ago.	1	2	3	4	5
2 Young people need more freedom and less interference from adults.	1	2	3	4	5
3 Adults should respect the wishes and views of young people.	1	2	3	4	5
4 Young people should be free to choose their own religion.	1	2	3	4	5
5 Young women do not get equal treatment in this society.	1	2	3	4	5
6 Young people cannot be expected to be treated as adults until they can earn their own money.	1	2	3	4	5
7 Young people at school and college should have a say in what is taught.	1	2	3	4	5
8 Young people should be encouraged to enjoy themselves.	1	2	3	4	5



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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Too much discipline is bad for young people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | Young people should obey the wishes of their parents. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | (Please add your own) | | | | | |
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