



Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch?

A Transition Unit Resource

Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch? supports the teaching of a Transition Unit developed to the NCCA template.

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Acknowledgements

'Ireland - A Level Playing Pitch?'

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Introduction

About this resource

This resource is designed for use with the Transition Unit: *'Ireland – a Level Playing Pitch?'* In piloting this resource, teachers have used it successfully in various subjects, adapting the suggested methods and content to the particular curricular needs of the subject. Therefore, cross-curricular use of this resource is possible and encouraged.

The rationale of this unit is to place students' community work within a context which emphasises an anti-poverty focus. People are considered to be living in poverty if their income and resources are so inadequate as to prevent them from enjoying a standard of living, which would be regarded as acceptable by society generally. This understanding of poverty recognises that people have social, cultural and emotional needs, as well as physical and economic needs. Living in poverty is not just about lack of money. It can also mean feeling excluded, isolated, powerless and discriminated against. Through this

unit students will explore the work of local community groups and organisations that enable and empower those who are affected by poverty to participate.

Many students in Transition Year engage in a period of community work. They often engage with community development groups and local clubs and organisations working with people with a mental or physical disability as well as crèches in areas of social economic disadvantage, youth projects and after-school clubs. Equally they may engage with organisations with a particular focus on groups that are marginalised in society, for example, Barnardos, Irish Wheelchair Association, Age Action, and Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. They encounter groups in Irish society who are more susceptible to poverty, for example children, lone parents, older people, people with illness or disability, as well as asylum seekers and refugees.

Currently there is no Transition Unit which enables students to explore and consider the

causes of poverty in Irish society; groups more likely to experience poverty; factors which influence the likelihood of being in poverty; and what poverty means for individuals and families.

This unit intends to provide that opportunity, as well as provide a context to explore the concept of poverty and social exclusion. It intends to look at the possible barriers to participation in Irish society and, through the students' community work experience, look at groups in society who endeavour to bring about social change and increase participation.

Engaging with local organisations, clubs and community development groups can be a valuable and worthwhile exercise – not least because learning about poverty is applied in local circumstances and does not become an academic pursuit. Also this type of engagement can contribute to the development of students as active and reflective citizens. The unit further intends to provide an opportunity to properly reflect on their community work experience.

“While teachers are rightly concerned about how students receive and process topics such as poverty, this concern is not a reason for avoiding contemporary social issues but rather a basis for identifying strategies and methods which facilitate the exploration of these topics in a constructive way. For students directly affected by the issues it should provide an opportunity to “name their own reality”, which is often not reflected in the mainstream curriculum or textbooks.

“For students not affected by poverty it provides an opportunity to broaden their understanding of contemporary Irish society and to reflect on the reality that many people, through poverty, are excluded from the mainstream of Irish society.

“Learning to understand poverty is not a question of ‘blaming individuals’ from any social group but of examining structures – social, economic and political – which contribute to reproducing advantage and disadvantage. This, in turn, contributes to developing students’ awareness and sense of active citizenship.”

Poverty in Focus, Maureen Bassett, ASTI & Combat Poverty Agency, 1995.

Using this resource

The resource is in five sections. Each section describes the aims, attitudes, knowledge and skills involved in the particular section and recommends certain activities. It is not expected that a teacher will work through the resource with their students from beginning to end.

Teachers should note that the materials presented are resources, which ideally should be adapted to individual class groups and situations. It is hoped that this resource will be used both by those who do not have a deep understanding of poverty and by those who have personal experience of poverty. The outcome for the former will hopefully be an awareness of, and commitment to, poverty alleviation. For the latter the resource offers an acknowledgement of their situation and a means to analyse it and work towards changing it. It is left to the discretion of the teacher to choose and adapt the activities as necessary, taking into account the circumstances and sensitivities of the students.

The resource aims to:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Develop learners' understanding and knowledge of the causes of poverty, as well as the nature and extent of poverty in Ireland |
| 2. | Develop learners' critical thinking skills through analysing the causes of poverty in Ireland within a human rights framework |
| 3. | Empower learners to engage in anti-poverty action and see its importance in engendering a just and equal society |
| 4. | Encourage learners to interact with organisations /community groups that have an anti-poverty focus |
| 5. | To foster in learners attitudes of respect, understanding and empathy towards people who may be marginalised in our society |

What is Poverty?

The Combat Poverty Agency, www.combatpoverty.ie, believes that poverty is caused by an unequal distribution of power and resources in society, and that eliminating poverty requires a shift in public policy to actively promote the inclusion of all. This resource is presented in keeping with this belief.

Defining Poverty

Absolute Poverty

When people do not have the physical necessities of life such as food, housing or clothing to survive in the world, they are said to be living in absolute poverty. This term describes outright destitution and struggles to survive and to stay alive. It is used mostly in relation to poorer countries (although there are people in Ireland who live in situations of absolute poverty).

Relative Poverty

In affluent countries like Ireland, poverty is more often defined in relative terms. In other words it is understood in the context of the general standard of living that is accepted as the norm for a society. In Ireland the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, which was launched by the Irish Government in April 1997, says that:

People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living that is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities that are considered the norm for other people.

This definition means that poverty is not just about money. It is also about not having the resources to participate fully in Irish society. Not having enough money is often compounded by being marginalised and isolated, discriminated against and feeling powerless.

The concept of social exclusion broadens our understanding of poverty, its causes and consequences. Social exclusion is a process which pushes people out to the edge of society and distances them further and further from the chance of a job or an adequate income, from social and educational opportunities, from social and community networks, and from power and decision-making.

Consistent Poverty

Persons who are on low incomes and experiencing deprivation in terms of 11 basics items, (lacking two or more items [not by choice] from the index below) are defined as being in consistent poverty.

- Two pairs of strong shoes
- A warm waterproof overcoat
- Buy new not second-hand clothes
- Eat meals with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day
- Have a roast joint or its equivalent once a week
- Had to go without heating during the last year through lack of money
- Keep the home adequately warm
- Buy presents for family or friends at least once a year
- Replace any worn out furniture
- Have family or friends for a drink or meal once a month
- Have a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight, for entertainment

Poverty in Ireland

The EU-SILC Survey 2005 shows the groups most at risk of being in poverty in Irish society. The following list is based on that survey and information from other research in recent years.

- Households headed by an unemployed person are one of the biggest groups in poverty.
- Households headed by someone working full time in the home (most of whom are women and many of whom are elderly women living alone), or by someone who is ill or with a disability also make up a significant number of those in poverty.
- Children face a much higher risk of poverty in Ireland than adults. Among a list of the world's wealthiest nations, Ireland ranks highly in terms of child poverty rates.
- Lone-parent families and larger families face a high risk of income poverty and lone parent families are also at risk of social isolation or discrimination.
- Travellers face high risks of poverty and higher infant and adult mortality rates than the settled community.
- Homeless people are exposed to high risks of poverty and other disadvantages.
- People living in public housing estates and remote rural areas often experience multiple forms of deprivation, for example, income poverty, poor housing and lack of access to services such as health or transport.
- Poverty among lesbians and gay men is worsened by fear of prejudice and the experience of discrimination in employment, educational opportunities and access to services.
- The low-paid, particularly households or individuals who are reliant on that low pay and where there are children, are at risk of falling into poverty. Low pay may put a family just over an income poverty line at a particular point in time. In the longer term it may not be possible to save or accumulate earnings to make expensive purchases such as furniture or household appliances or for times of greater expense, such as illness, bereavement in the family or even Christmas and birthdays. People in low-paid jobs may be vulnerable to

unemployment and are less likely to have occupational pension or sick pay schemes.

- Asylum seekers and refugees face high risks of poverty.

Factors which influence the likelihood of being in poverty include the following, many of which are inter-related:

- Social class
- Employment status
- Educational experience
- Family size and type
- Ill health or disability
- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Household tenure
- Sexual orientation

Poverty for individuals and families often means:

- Struggling to make ends meet on an inadequate income
- Being out of a job
- Living in poor housing
- Getting into debt
- Feeling discriminated against
- Suffering from poor health; physical or psychological
- Having fewer educational opportunities
- Surviving on an inadequate diet
- Having few social, cultural or recreational opportunities

For a teenager poverty means:

- Not being able to go out as much with your friends
- Not being able to go to university
- Having to get a job to help your parents get by
- Not having enough money
- Feeling ashamed
- Feeling discriminated against
- People looking down on you because you can't afford what they may have
- Not experiencing the everyday things that other teenagers have in their lives
- Being embarrassed when asked what presents you got for Christmas, birthdays etc.

Learning about Poverty

Like a multitude of social and political issues the subject of poverty is both complex and potentially sensitive. Therefore, it stands to reason that introducing poverty issues into the classroom requires a teacher to adopt a sensitive approach whilst dealing competently with controversy that may occur. It is important that the teacher reflects personally on their own attitudes to the issue of poverty, disadvantage and equality in general. Teachers need to be aware of the facts that relate to poverty in Ireland today.

It is important to note that much debate and controversy can be settled by bearing in mind the following when dealing with poverty issues in the classroom:

- Clarifying definitions, for example how poverty is defined
- Emphasising social exclusion
- Emphasising denial of rights/full citizenship
- Emphasising the social, economic and political structures and systems that underpin poverty
- Examining wealth and its relation to poverty
- Challenging and discussing damaging stereotypes
- Challenging and discussing discriminatory attitudes and actions
- Not seeing people experiencing poverty as the problem
- Emphasising that many people experiencing poverty are actively engaged in trying to improve their situation
- Encouraging students to explore different responses to poverty, in particular empowerment approaches compared to charitable responses
- Being aware of different groups/geographical areas, which experience poverty
- Emphasising the need for responses at different levels e.g. individual, groups/organisations, community, government, local, national and EU
- Ensuring that the study of poverty doesn't

simply become an academic one but that students realise that poverty deeply affects peoples' lives.

Bassett, M. 1995. *Poverty In Focus*. Combat Poverty Agency

This Transition Unit explores these issues.

Community Work Experience and Poverty Awareness

In undertaking community work experience and in carrying out any action on an issue related to poverty or social exclusion the following points are important to bear in mind.

- It is worth preparing the students for doing community work experience by assessing differing responses to poverty and becoming sensitised to the issues involved. By completing activities in the first four sections of this resource, students should come to a greater understanding of the issues involved in poverty awareness and social inclusion.
- Engaging in community work experience can be a valuable and worthwhile exercise, not least because learning about poverty is applied to local circumstances and does not become an academic pursuit.
- Of equal importance is the need to adequately prepare students to ensure that they are not exposed to situations, which may raise feelings of guilt, anger, hopelessness or helplessness, etc. Taking action is a good way of ensuring this so that students have a sense of feeling empowered to change something.
- There is enormous potential for action to be carried out under the broad heading of poverty awareness. However, the challenge is to make it as meaningful and relevant for students as possible. One means of doing this is to provide students with the opportunity to take action on an issue within the local community or the school.

Section 1

Exploring Poverty

Aims

- To increase understanding of the often harmful nature of stereotyping.
- To increase understanding of the nature, extent and causes of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland.
- To provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon their understanding and attitudes towards poverty and social exclusion in Ireland.
- To develop empathy with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.
- To provide students with information about how poverty is defined.

Attitudes & Values

- Respect for the opinions of others
- Development of empathy with people affected by poverty and social exclusion
- Awareness of rights and responsibilities
- A sense of the value of rational debate and discussion

Knowledge

- Groups and individuals at risk of experiencing poverty and social exclusion
- How poverty is defined
- Structural causes of poverty

Skills

- Analysis – of photographs, cartoons, case studies
- Reflection – of personal attitudes and knowledge
- Communication – discussion, debating, group work, listening

Activity 1:

Establishing Ground Rules

Aims

- To establish ground rules for group work and discussion.
- To develop a sense of fairness and responsibility amongst students in relation to their own comfort and that of other students in the classroom and during activities.

Materials

A copy of Activity Sheet 1 'Ground Rules' for each group

Method

The teacher guides the class through the following activity:

- Imagine that you have to spend two months in the Big Brother household. You have more than enough food, water and other supplies to last. You need to find a way of living peacefully together as no one will leave the house until the two months are up.
- On your own, list five ways in which house members could make life difficult for one another. On your own, list five ways in which house members could make life more pleasant for one another.
- Divide the class into groups of four (approximately). Ask the group to draw up five rules using the lists. Stress that everyone must stick to the same rules if the housemates are to live peacefully until their release. The group should also draw up the top five ways that life could be made unpleasant. Try to reach a consensus about the rules chosen.
- Take the feedback and list both rules and ways of making life unpleasant for general discussion and clarification if necessary. Prioritise five rules.
- You may need to remind students of the following or to add one or two rules if necessary:

- Respect for difference – we are all different but we are all equal. Everyone has a right to their opinion as long as it doesn't affect other peoples' rights.
- Everyone should be allowed to talk without being interrupted.
- Everyone should be given the same amount of time and space. No one should take up all the class time.
- Everyone has the right to be listened to.
- When you want to say something, start with 'I think' and not 'Everyone says'. Everybody can only talk for himself and herself.
- Everybody should be responsible for what they do, say and feel. Everyone is also responsible for what they don't say – if we see something wrong we should say it.
- Display the rules prominently in the classroom and refer back to them periodically. It may be useful to occasionally review how the class is doing in terms of observing the ground rules and whether they need to be revised in the light of this.

Activity 2: Stereotyping and Labelling

Aims

- To highlight that stereotypes are based upon generalisations that are often inaccurate.
- To challenge pre-existing stereotypes held by students, either directly or indirectly, by encouraging other students to put forward counter-views.
- To develop within students an understanding of the powerful and often harmful nature of stereotyping and labelling.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 2 'Labelling' for each student.
- A copy of Activity 2 'Stereotype & Reality' Information Sheet for Teachers

Method

1. Distribute the Activity Sheet 2 'Labelling' and ask the students to fill it out.
2. Begin the feedback with the following:
 - Which words were circled the most?
 - Who uses these words/labels about young people?
 - Are some people mentioned often in 'who uses the labels'?
 - Focus on why these people may use these labels.
 - How does it feel to be labelled, particularly when a label is unfairly used?

During the discussion emphasis should be placed on the fairness of labelling a person because of their group membership, and the need to consider each person as an individual.

Follow-on activity

Follow with a brainstorm of stereotypes that are held about people who live in poverty or

wealth. Write these on the board and discuss their validity in light of the previous activity. Are they fair? Are they true? It is important to ask students where they think they received these messages. Where possible, present a statement that refutes the stereotype, examples provided in Activity 2 'Stereotype & Reality' Information Sheet for Teachers (page 14).

Further Activities

Contact the Combat Poverty Agency, www.combatpoverty.ie, or visit its website to investigate the validity of statements such as those on pg 19.

Construct a display to illustrate the findings to the school community at large.

Activity 2

Stereotype and Reality Information Sheet for Teachers

Stereotype	Reality
All farmers are rich.	Farmers are among those most at risk of poverty in terms of housing and health.
People who are poor waste their money on drink and cigarettes.	People affected by poverty spend no more of their money on drink and cigarettes than the average family. Sometimes they spend less. Not all people in poverty drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes.
People don't know how to manage their money.	A lot of people who experience poverty are very good at managing the little money that they have. The reality is that they often don't have enough money to survive on.
Travellers are all loaded. They drive new vans and pay for them in cash.	Some Travellers are well off. A lot of Travellers are in severe poverty.
Refugees get houses before Irish people who were on waiting lists.	Refugees in need of social housing have to go through the same process to become housed as everyone else. They join the waiting list in the same way as other people.
People who are on the dole could find work if they wanted to.	Many people who have been on the dole have been unemployed for a long time and don't have the skills to keep a job. Many do find jobs that are low paid and insecure so they may end up on the dole.
There is no such thing as poverty.	A recent survey (2005) showed that 7% of persons were in households that reported being 'unable to afford new (rather than second hand) clothes' and 6.5% went without heating at some stage in the past year due to lack of money.
Refugees don't seem to be short of cash. They all have mobile phones and cars.	Not all Refugees are poor. People look for refugee status for various reasons including being under threat in their own countries, natural or man-made disasters, conflict or poverty.

Activity 3:

Images of Poverty and Wealth

Aims

- To introduce students to the issue of poverty by exploring images and understandings of wealth and poverty in Ireland today.
- To introduce the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and the diversity of groups and individuals who tend to experience it.

Materials

- A large selection of photographs from students' own collection gathered from newspapers and magazines
- A copy of Activity Sheet 3 'Images' for each student in the class

Method

1. Spread the photographs randomly in a place where students can view them easily and give a copy of Activity Sheet 3 'Images' to each student.
2. Divide the class in half - one half will look at images of poverty, the other at images of wealth. After viewing all the photographs each student should choose one that, for them, symbolises wealth/poverty.
3. Students should then spend a few minutes reflecting on why they chose it by filling in the sheet [if space is scarce divide the class into groups and distribute a selection of photographs amongst each group]. Each group should then choose one image of poverty and one image of wealth and fill out a worksheet for each image.
4. Starting with the images of wealth, each person/group should show their chosen photo and briefly give reasons for their choice.
5. Have a general discussion on why people chose certain photographs. The following questions should form the basis of the discussion:

- Do the photos reflect positive/negative images of people?
- Are the images chosen related to either having or not having money?
- Do any of the chosen photographs represent images of both poverty and wealth?
- How do you think the people in the photograph would feel if they knew that they were chosen as an image of wealth/poverty?
- Have other people's choices made you change your opinion in any way?
- Are there other places in everyday life where you see images of wealth and poverty? Where? Are they like the images presented here?
- What do the chosen photographs tell us about stereotypes of poverty? If anything?

Activity 4:

Poverty is...?

Aims

- To further understand the multi-dimensional nature of poverty.
- To encourage students to move away from a narrow picture of poverty as being just about money.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 4 'Poverty is...?' for each student in the class

Method

Give each student a copy of Activity Sheet 4 'Poverty is...?'

1. Spend a few minutes considering the relevance of the words suggested to a broader understanding of poverty.
2. Invite the students to spend some time completing as many bubbles as possible on the activity sheet.
3. When complete take some feedback from students and discuss with the whole class.

Activity 5: Defining Poverty

Aims

- To develop students' understanding of how poverty is defined and the concepts of relative and absolute poverty (see page 8 for a full explanation of these terms)
 - To engage students in thinking about how they perceive poverty
 - To provide information on how poverty is defined
6. Ask the students to list what they feel are 'acceptable standards of living' in Ireland today.
 7. Using Activity Sheet 5 'Case Studies' discuss whether Jackie, Jessica, Angela and Mick are experiencing poverty and why this is the case.
 8. Compare this to the acceptable standard of living the students have described.
 9. Depending on the ability level of the students, you may wish to give the definition of poverty decided by the Government in 1997 (see page 8).
 10. Discuss this in light of the acceptable standards of living discussed earlier.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 5 '*It's all Relative*' for use as a handout
- A copy of Activity Sheet 5 '*Case Studies*' for each student

Method

1. Using Activity Sheet 5 '*It's all Relative*'; explain the difference between these two types of poverty.
2. Spend a couple of minutes brainstorming what is understood by the term poverty. From the responses identify different types of poverty that may be apparent, for example, 'not having enough money' (relative poverty) compared with 'not having any money' (absolute poverty).
3. Depending on the ability of the class you may choose to avoid using the terms 'absolute' and 'relative'.
4. What is important is that students develop an understanding of different levels of poverty and that, as a nation, Ireland defines poverty partly by comparing standards of living.
5. Discuss the type of poverty (relative) that is portrayed in the cartoons (Activity Sheet 5 '*It's all Relative*'). The following may prove useful for discussion:
Which person in the cartoon may experience poverty? Why? Can you describe a situation where another person could be considered to be less well off than this?

Activity 6: Walking debate

Aims

- To deepen understanding of the concept of absolute and relative poverty.
- To provide an opportunity for students to experience a walking debate.
- To encourage each student to form opinions based on rational argument.

Materials

- A large clear space either in a classroom or in a hall or yard
- Two signs with the words 'I agree strongly'/'I disagree strongly' clearly displayed in large lettering on either side of the classroom/hall

Method

1. Stand in the middle of the room with the group around you.
2. Explain that you will read out some statements from Activity 6 *'Information Sheet for Teachers 'Do You Agree?'*
3. The statements are about poverty. Those who agree with the statement move towards the poster that says 'I agree strongly'.
4. Those who disagree move to the opposite end of the room.
5. Those who are unsure stay in the middle.
6. Start the debate with a light-hearted statement, something that students will respond to, for example, *'Being Poor is when you can't afford your own helicopter.'*
7. Explain that the object of the game is to raise discussion and that everyone's position is important.
8. During discussion ask the students to think again about the concepts of absolute and relative poverty and/or 'acceptable living standards in Ireland'.
9. To raise discussion ask those who agree to defend their position and those who disagree to defend theirs.
10. People at either end of the room should try to persuade those in the middle, or on the opposite side, to join them or even just to move a step or two closer.
11. It is important that students realise that they may change their mind.
12. Move to a new statement when the discussion dies down or after a set period.
13. Bring students back into the middle of the room before moving on to a new statement.

Activity 6

Information Sheet for Teachers 'Do you Agree?'

Being Poor is...	I Agree	I disagree
If you are poor you can't afford to eat healthy food.		
Real poverty is only found in countries where people die because they don't have food to eat.		
If you are poor you shouldn't expect to be able to go on holidays, even for a weekend break.		
All young people get the same education. Some people just don't want to learn and 'drop out' early.		
People who are poor shouldn't expect to be able to go to a disco or the cinema or other things like that.		
People who are well off deserve all they have because they work hard for it.		
Poor people should be happy with what they are given. They don't deserve to have a choice, for example, in the clothes they buy.		
School trips should only be there for those who can afford them.		
People who pay VHI or BUPA deserve better health treatment than those who don't.		
There wouldn't be as many poor people if they weren't given so much from social welfare.		

Activity 7: Who Does Poverty Effect and How?

Aims

- To provide students with an understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of poverty.
- To illustrate diverse groups and individuals in Irish society who are at risk of experiencing poverty.
- To highlight the impact of poverty and social exclusion in terms of the effects it has on the individuals who experience it.

Materials

- Photocopies of Activity 7 'Story Cards – Who Does Poverty Effect?' cut into individual cards
- Six copies of Activity Sheet 7 'Who and How?' or one per group
- A copy of Activity Sheet 7 'What is Poverty?' for each student.

Method

1. Divide the class into six groups. Allocate two stories to each group to read.
2. Give a copy of the 'Who and How?' sheet to each group and appoint one person to fill in the sheet and one person to give feedback to the whole class.
3. The groups should spend some time reading the stories prior to filling in activity sheet 'Who and How?'. The activity sheet aids students in identifying what group the story refers to and how this group or individual member of the group is affected by poverty. It is important to stress that these are groups who are at risk of experiencing poverty and that care should be taken against stereotyping.
4. Each group should provide a summary of their stories for the other groups indicating who it was about and how they are affected by poverty and social exclusion.

5. In the whole class group discuss the stories, drawing particular attention to the following points for discussion:
 - Stereotyping – it is important to point out that while the individuals represented in the role cards are members of groups at particular risk of experiencing poverty, not all members of those groups will be affected by poverty. Tease this point out by asking students to identify people or characters in public life who identify as members of these groups but who do not experience poverty
 - Similarities and differences between circumstances - a number of story cards have a recurring theme of prejudice and discrimination. An important point for discussion is how this can lead to someone experiencing poverty. Chinedu, Jason, Aisling and Michael have all experienced prejudice or discrimination
 - The cyclical nature of poverty is an important point for discussion.
6. Complete this activity by distributing a copy of Activity Sheet 7 'What is Poverty?' to each student or displaying a copy on an OHP.
7. Instruct the students to fill in as many effects as possible arising from the activity using the story cards. Alternatively, draw a web on the board and ask for effects of poverty and write these in on the web.
8. Finish by discussing the relevance of the spider's web image.
 - The image of the web is used to illustrate the multiple effects of poverty and the complexity of the issue.
 - This worksheet is designed to help students to see the cyclical nature of poverty.

*The most recently published information on poverty in Ireland is derived from the EU-SILC Statistics on Income and Living Conditions 2005. Some groups in Irish society are more at risk of being in poverty than others. It is important to note that while members of these groups are at risk of experiencing poverty, everyone who identifies as members of these groups will not experience poverty. In this regard it is important that students don't stereotype accordingly.

Activity 7

Information sheet for Teachers

– summary of case studies

No.	Name	Situation	Case Study Themes
1.	Noel	Long-term unemployment married with 5 children	Debt/Lack of dignity/Depression
2.	Lynsey	Lone Parent	Health/Poor housing/Prejudice
3.	Marie	Lone Parent	Separation & Divorce/Debt/Deprivation e.g. relative poverty
4.	Michael	Disability	Unemployment/Dignity/Unfulfilled potential/Prejudice/Discrimination
5.	Aisling	Lesbian	Low income/Fear of discrimination/Prejudice – link with under achievement
6.	Jessica	Working class/low income	Unemployment/Relative poverty/Deprivation
7.	Mick	Small Farmer married with 4 children	Social welfare supplements/Inadequate Income
8.	Paula	Homeless	Absolute poverty/Hopelessness/Fear for security and personal safety
9.	Laura	Traveller	Early school leaver/Prejudice/Discrimination/Dignity
10.	Mary	Older Person	Inadequate or inappropriate housing/Isolation/Fear/Deprivation
11.	Chinedu	Asylum Seeker	Unemployment/Inequality/Prejudice/Discrimination
12.	Jason	Working class/Disadvantage Area	Discrimination/Prejudice/Unfulfilled potential

Activity 8: Exploring the cause of poverty

Aims

- To explore the causes of poverty in Ireland today.
- To illustrate that many of the causes are due to how society is structured and organised.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 8 *'Possible Causes of Poverty'* for each student
- A copy of Activity 8 *'Newspaper Articles'* per group or student
- A copy of Activity Sheet 8 *'Against the Odds'* for each student

Follow-on activity

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 and distribute copies of Activity Sheet 8 *'Possible Causes of Poverty'* to each student.
2. Ask the students to discuss what they consider to be the most significant causes of poverty. The group should agree on three.
3. Each group should then feedback the three causes they agreed upon. List on the board or circle on Activity Sheet 8 *'Possible Causes of Poverty'*.
4. Similarities and differences between groups should be identified. It may not have been possible for the group to reach agreement.
5. During the feedback discuss the difficulties that arose in reaching agreement. What do other groups think?
6. To facilitate a further understanding of poverty distribute Activity Sheet 8 *'Against the Odds'* and Activity 8 *Newspaper Article*.
 - Students can read the newspaper article in groups or it could be read aloud to the class.
 - In small groups ask the students to discuss each story and complete Activity Sheet 8 *'Against the Odds'*.
7. After this activity is complete discuss (as a class group):
 - What are the causes of poverty in each case?
 - What are the effects of poverty in each case?
8. Finish the discussion by inviting suggestions on solutions to the two stories.

Section 2

Poverty & Rights

Aims

- To develop awareness of the interrelatedness of poverty and human rights and responsibilities.
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore the importance they attach to particular human rights.
- To provide students with an opportunity to apply their knowledge of Human Rights Conventions to situations of poverty and exclusion in Ireland.

Attitude and values

- To develop an appreciation and respect for the rights of self and others, including an acceptance of personal and social responsibility for protecting the rights of those who may be vulnerable to having their rights denied
- To develop an appreciation of a hierarchy in terms of basic human needs

- To understand the difference between needs and wants

Knowledge

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Skills

- Analysis – media, case study
- Communication – discussion, group participation, role play, listening, designing
- Awareness raising – posters

Activity 9:

Basic Needs

Aims

- To introduce students to the concept of basic human needs.
- To develop the ability to apply theory to real-life situations.
- To develop students' capacity to distinguish between needs and wants.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 9 '*Maslow's Pyramid of Needs*' for each student

Method

1. Read the contents of Activity Sheet 9 '*Maslow's Pyramid of Needs*'. Ask students if they agree or disagree with Maslow's theory?
2. Point out that Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of needs is only one of many and has many critics as with all theories. Ask the students to write the list of needs into the pyramid at the level they belong.
3. Read Jackie and Jessica's stories and discuss their needs in light of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Refer back to the concepts of 'absolute' and 'relative' poverty. Ask how they relate to basic human needs.
4. Brainstorm on what the class considers essential for their own survival. Write these on the board. Ask the students to rewrite this list dividing it into 'needs' and 'wants'.
5. Discuss where students placed each item.

Further Activities

Invite a local T.D. to discuss how and where basic human needs are provided for in the Irish Constitution.

Activity 10: In the News

Aims

- To increase students' familiarity with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- To develop empathy with, and understanding of, the experience of poverty and social exclusion by looking at the situation for asylum seekers in Ireland
- To develop creative and writing skills

Materials

- Copies of Activity Sheet 10 *'In the News'*
- Copies of Activity Sheet 10 *'Human Rights'* (This will be used again in the next activity)

Note: This activity may be done as an individual or group activity

Method

1. Distribute a copy of Activity Sheets 10 *'In the News'* and *'Human Rights'* to each student or a set of worksheets per group, depending on whether you approach this as an individual or group activity.
2. Read and discuss the newspaper articles about being an asylum seeker. Using Activity Sheet 10 *'Human Rights'*, containing a summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ask students about possible rights asylum seekers are being denied. Discuss the link between these rights and basic needs. List these rights on the board.
3. Using the information provided in the newspaper article, discuss with students if they think Ireland's asylum seekers procedures are fair.

4. Ask the students to spend a few moments imagining themselves as an asylum seeker living in Ireland. How would they feel if they were in that situation – physically, emotionally and mentally? Allow some time for students to speak about how they imagine they would feel.
5. Ask the students to write their own story of an asylum seeker living in Ireland. They could refer back to earlier activities they have done on the effects and causes of poverty. Remind the students to avoid stereotyping and to keep in mind the human dignity of the person they are writing about. Students can exchange their stories and discuss them in small groups.

Further Activities

- Investigate what services are available to asylum seekers
- Invite a speaker from an organisation (e.g. ARASI or Refugee Council)

Activity 11: It's Not Right

Aims

- To provide students with an opportunity to apply the Human Rights Conventions to situations in Ireland where people do not enjoy the rights as laid out.
 - To provide an opportunity for students to work together in developing a poster awareness campaign highlighting the issue of human rights and poverty.
 - To encourage students to think about awareness-raising actions.
4. Ask each group to report back by displaying and explaining their poster. They should identify who their story card was about, what rights were being denied them and the purpose of the message conveyed by their poster.

Further Activities

- Display the posters around the school in order to raise the awareness of other students.
- Organise an awareness-raising poster campaign on the theme of poverty and human rights. You could organise this as an art competition and request sponsorship for prizes from local businesses.

Materials

- Copies of Activity Sheet 10 '*Human Rights*' from Activity 10 for each group of students
- Copies of Activity Sheet 5 '*Case Studies*' (one story per group of students)
- Four or five large sheets of poster size paper
- Markers/paints

Method

1. Divide the class into four/five groups and distribute copies of Activity Sheet 10 '*Human Rights*', and one case study from Activity Sheet 5 '*Case Studies*' to each group
2. Instruct the groups to read the case studies and, using the Human Rights sheet, to identify the rights that are being denied to the characters. Explain that they will be asked to feedback this information to the whole class later.
3. Distribute large sheets of paper and markers to each group and ask them to design an awareness-raising poster to highlight the denial of human rights to the particular group represented by the case studies. (Groups represented are Travellers, people with disabilities, lone parent/low income, and older people). As a means of generating ideas for the poster suggest that they consider what causes the denial of rights, for example, discrimination or structural causes etc.

Activity 12:

Standing up for their rights

Aims

- To introduce students to the nine grounds on which discrimination is illegal under the Employment Equality Acts, 1998 and 1994 and the Equal Status Act, 2004.
- To provide an opportunity for students to discuss how discrimination could be a contributing factor to being 'at risk' of experiencing poverty.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 12 '*Standing Up for their Rights*' for each student

Method

1. Give a copy of Activity Sheet 12 '*Standing Up for their Rights*' to each student and ask them to read the stories about rights being upheld and answer the questions that follow. The nine grounds against discrimination are age, ethnic background, marital status, gender, membership of the Travelling Community, disability, family status, sexual orientation and religion. If needed these could be written on the board for students.
2. Discuss the cases and the responses given to the question.
3. Discuss other ways that people can be discriminated against because of their age, e.g. motor insurance. Are laws effective in stopping discrimination?

Further Activities

- Contact the Equality Authority to find out more about equality laws in Ireland.
- Research cases taken by citizens to the Equality Authority using the Internet and other media.

Activity 13: Rights Auction

Aims

- To provide students with the opportunity to develop their thinking on the relationship between basic human needs and human rights.
- To encourage students to reflect upon the importance they attach to particular rights.
- To reinforce understanding of the relationship between poverty and human rights.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 13 '*Rights Auction Scenario*' for each group
- A copy of Activity Sheet 10 '*Human Rights*' for each student or displayed on OHP
- Blank sheets of paper
- Large sheets of paper e.g. flipchart paper (one per group)
- Markers
- Four x sets of Activity Sheet 13 '*Auction money*' (€1,000 in each set i.e. five x €100; six x €50; five x €20; five x €10; ten x €5)
- Photocopy the money sheet onto cardboard in order that it may be used again

Method

1. Distribute a copy of Activity Sheet 10 '*Human Rights*' to each student or display on an OHP.
2. Read the Activity Sheet 13 '*Rights Auction Scenario*' aloud and ask students to identify which are the most important rights that are being denied to Jackie.
3. Write these onto the poster paper and stick onto board/wall. These rights will later be sold at auction to the highest bidder.
4. Divide the class into four groups and distribute a copy of the Activity Sheet 13 '*Rights Auction Scenario*' to each group. Read and allow some time for the groups to discuss it (five to ten minutes).

5. Choose one person to act as the auctioneer and one person to act as his/her assistant to collect the money. Instruct the auctioneer to sell the rights to the highest bidder. Each right is auctioned in whatever order the auctioneer decides. The groups pay for the rights as they buy them.
6. When all the rights have been auctioned ask the groups to write up the rights that they bought on a large sheet. Each group should then explain what rights they bought and why they bought them.
7. The class should then try to reach a consensus on which group secured the best possible future for Jackie. The following are some suggestions for discussion:
 - Which rights are the most important? Why?
 - Are there any really important rights missing? What are they?
 - How can we ensure that each child and young person in Ireland is afforded their rights?

*Adapted from The Rights Stuff. DEFY/Amnesty International/Trócaire

Section 3

Exploring Community Action

Aims

- To enable students to identify and distinguish between different types of communities (i.e. geographical and special interest communities).
- To develop students' sense of belonging to communities.
- To highlight active citizenship in community involvement and participation.
- To highlight individuals and communities taking action on issues of personal or local concern.
- To challenge stereotypical images of people experiencing poverty as dependent by presenting examples of people being active in improving their own situations.

Attitudes & values

- It is hoped that students will develop a sense of respect and appreciation for the diversity of experience and background that exists in all communities. This section also aims to foster respect for empowerment

and solidarity approaches and responses to social exclusion, poverty and other types of injustice.

Knowledge

- Distinction between types of communities
- Impact of social exclusion
- Community development projects

Skills

- Analysis – photographs and media
- Communication – personal and interpersonal reflection, group work, simulation
- Action skills

Activity 14:

Types of Communities

Aims

- To identify different types of communities and to explore their needs.
- To develop awareness of different communities that exist within the locality of the school and to become aware of their needs as members of the overall community.

Materials

- A selection of photographs from this resource (Activity Sheet 3), in addition to students' own collection gathered from newspapers and magazines. The photographs should depict different types of communities. For example, residential, Traveller, farming, work, family, rural, urban, women's group, ethnic minority, older people, school, sports, special interest community (e.g. disability jobs protest).
- A copy of Activity Sheet 14 'Types of Communities' for each student or group.

Method

1. Stick the photographs/newspaper and magazine cuttings on the walls of the classroom or distribute them to groups in the class.
2. Ask the students to identify different types of communities represented by the photographs. Write these onto the board.
3. Brainstorm other types of communities that may not be represented here, particularly ones that the students are involved in or are aware of in their communities.
4. Using the definition provided explain how community is defined.

Community

The term 'community' usually refers to groups of people who live in geographical areas that provide some kind of common bond or identity – a single housing estate, a parish or village, a scattered suburban area on the edge of a city or town, a street or a townland. But a community can also consist of a group of individuals who come together on the basis of some other interest or who have a common identity for instance, women, Travellers, lone parents, people with disabilities, students, lesbians, gay men, older people, young people or religious groupings.

A variety of diverse groups make up local communities. Many locally based groups will organise around a common agenda for their community. Minority or other groups within that community may want to organise either in addition to or separately from their local group.

(Combat Poverty Agency, 2000)

5. Ask the students to separate the communities represented in the photographs into (1) geographical communities (2) special interest/common identity communities using Activity Sheet 14 'Types of Communities'.
6. Discuss the following:
 - What is common and what is distinctive about these communities and their needs?
 - Discuss other communities that may exist that are not outlined here.
 - Brainstorm and discuss what the needs of particular types of communities are. Use the word box on Activity Sheet 14 'Types of Communities' to help.

Further activities

- Investigate what facilities and services are available within your community. You may wish to confine your investigation to facilities and services specific to one group, for example older people or young people.
- Carry out a survey to identify what needs are not being met by current facilities and services.
- Carry out a media investigation into different types of communities that exist within your local area. Which communities get more media attention than others? Why?

Activity 15:

Giant Steps*

Aims

- To develop empathy and understanding among students in relation to social exclusion* and poverty and the resultant effects on peoples' participation in their communities and society in general.

* The concept of social exclusion broadens our understanding of poverty, its causes and consequences. Social exclusion is a process which pushes people out to the edge of society and distances them further and further from the chance of a job or an adequate income, from social and educational opportunities, from social and community networks and from power and decision-making.

Materials

- A large clear space and copies of the Activity Sheet 15 'Giant Steps Role Cards' - one role card for each student

Method

1. Distribute Activity Sheet 15 'Giant Steps Role Card' to each participant.
2. Ask the students to read their role card and to enter into their roles by thinking about who they are, where they live, how many are in their family, what kind of life they have, whether they feel as though they belong in their community, school, family etc.
3. Instruct students to stand in character at one end of the room with their backs against the wall. Use the full length of the space.
4. Explain that you are going to read out statements. (Use Activity Sheet 15 'Giant Steps Statements' for this).

After each statement is read they must

- Take a giant step if they can do it quite easily or if the statement fully applies to them.
 - Take a baby step if they can do it but with difficulty or if it applies to them a little bit.
 - Don't move if they can't do it at all.
1. Emphasise that the aim of the exercise is to try to experience what life is like for the character as a member of their community – it is not about reaching the end first, or even at all.
 2. Now call out the first statement. Once everybody has responded, ask them to explain what they did and why. Choose more statements, read them out, and allow participants to make their move.
 3. Alternatively, read all the statements out consecutively and ask participants at the end to explain who their character was and which statements they found applied to them more than others and vice versa. The latter method is useful if time is limited or if you are using this as an introductory activity during a class.
 4. When all the statements have been read begin the debriefing.

De-briefing

- Who got the furthest along? Why? Do you think this happens in real life?
- Who got left behind/out? Why? Do you think this happens in real life?
- How did you feel when you took a giant step/couldn't move?
- How did you feel when others were moving at a faster/slower pace than you?
- Do you think that there are people/groups in your community that feel left out (excluded)? Who are they? Why are they excluded?
- Choose one character e.g. Nicola, Jackie or Joe. Discuss what could be done so that he/she could feel more part of the community and could have more opportunities in life.
- Introduce the definition of social exclusion and discuss if it applies to the people in the roles.

Note to teacher

It is important that you read the role cards carefully before assigning them to students. If space is limited select ten students to assume the characters. However, empathy is more effectively generated when the student feels excluded (i.e. when they are unable to move or to move quickly enough so involving all students in the activity is preferable).

*Adapted from The Rights Stuff. DEFY/Amnesty International/Trócaire

Activity 16:

Communities taking Action

Aims

- To introduce the concept of community development.*
- To develop an understanding of the link between community development and active citizenship.
- To provide positive examples of people experiencing poverty being proactive in improving their situations.

*Community Development

Community development is essentially about people working collectively for social change, which will improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live and/or the society of which they are a part. It is a collective process, with an emphasis on 'process' i.e. how change is achieved, as well as outcome, i.e. what is achieved. It helps people to identify and articulate their needs and influence the decision-making processes and structures that affect them, their communities and wider society. In an anti-poverty context, community development is about enabling and empowering those who are disadvantaged to participate in this work for change. Community development is about working for change at three levels:

- Personal – a focus on empowerment and participation;
- Community – a collective rather than an individual approach;
- Public policy – based on a social analysis and understanding of the causes of poverty and disadvantage and a commitment to equality and social justice.

Materials

- One case study per group from Activity Sheet 16 'Case Studies'
- One copy of Activity Sheet 16 'Communities Taking Action' for each student

Method

- Carry out an initial brainstorm on what students understand by community and development.
- One case study per group from Activity Sheet 16 'Case Studies'.
- One copy of Activity Sheet 16 'Communities Taking Action' for each student.
- Carry out an initial brainstorm on what students understand by community and development.
- Divide the class into groups.
- Distribute one case study to each group and a copy of Activity Sheet 16 'Communities Taking Action' to each student.
- Instruct the groups to read the stories about communities taking action/ community development and to fill in the worksheet. The group should discuss together the last question before writing an answer. Explain that they will have to tell the other groups about their case study and report back on what they wrote on their worksheet.
- It is particularly important that the final question is done properly as this will help the students to apply the definition of community development to a real-life situation.
- When all the groups have finished ask one or two members of each group to report on their answers to the whole class. In particular discuss each group's conclusion on whether their particular case study is a good example of community development and why they think this.

Further activities

- Draw, write or gather photographs or stories from newspapers, which are about exclusion. Create a display for your classroom or some other prominent area of the school.
- Keep an 'ideas notebooks' on the theme of poverty and social exclusion. The notebook can be in any format and can contain any material, verbal or graphic – words, phrases, drawings, photos, poems, stories – and can form a personal record for the students of their progress.
- Imagine you are a journalist writing an article about the needs of your community. The editor has asked you to focus on people whose needs are not being met or people who are excluded. Write the interview that you would have with one of the characters from the giant steps game (page 31). Make sure to ask the person if they feel that they belong to their community and if they feel that their opinion and voice counts. Students could compile all the articles into a newsletter for the school as an awareness-raising tool.
- Assess the situation of the characters in the giant steps game in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Are their rights being met?
- Investigate whether there is a community group or organisation in your area that works with any one of the groups at particular risk of experiencing social exclusion or disadvantage. Write to them and invite a speaker to come into your class. Plan and carry out an awareness-raising day in your school around the issues facing this particular group.

Section 4

Poverty and the State

Aims

- To develop understanding of poverty as a national issue affecting a sizeable proportion of the population of Ireland.
- To develop awareness of how poverty is treated as an issue in the media and by society in general.
- To provide information on government (national) responses to poverty through the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (the current strategy called NAPinclusion) and to analyse its effectiveness.

Attitudes & values

- Appreciation for the workings of the State and national responses to combat poverty and social exclusion
- Respect for critical awareness and thought in relation to the impact of national initiatives on individual lives
- A commitment to active, constructive, participative citizenship

Knowledge

- The National Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Facts on poverty in Ireland today
- Workings of the State

Skills

- Communication – debating, discussing
- Analysis – media, application
- Identification – the internet, telephone, letter-writing
- Action

Activity 17:

Poverty – A national issue, true or false?

Further activities

- Check out the Combat Poverty Agency website www.combatpoverty.ie for more information about poverty in Ireland today.

Aims

- To demonstrate that poverty is a national issue in Ireland and that this issue affects a large proportion of the population.
- To provide students with some key facts relating to poverty in Ireland today.

Materials

- One copy of the Activity Sheet 17 'True or False' cut into individual statements
- Two A4 signs with TRUE and FALSE printed in large lettering on each
- Alternative method: A copy of Activity Sheet 17 'True or False' for each student

Method

1. Place each sign on a separate chair at the front of the room.
2. Distribute one statement from True or False to ten individual students.
3. Ask each student to read out the statement and to place it on the appropriate true/false chair depending on whether they believe it to be true/false. They should explain their decision. You may choose to ask the students to discuss the statements first in small groups.
4. Discuss the validity of the statement with the remainder of the class. Is there agreement /disagreement. Why?
5. Confirm the correct answer and read out the additional information provided on Activity 17 'Statement Information Sheet'. Allow time for any discussion that this may prompt.

Alternative: Photocopy and distribute a copy of Activity 17 'Statement Information Sheet' to each student as an individual classroom or homework activity. Discuss the validity of each statement and give the correct answer with the explanation.

Activity 17 Statement Information Sheet

Statement	Fact
1. There is no such thing as a poor farmer.	False. Farmers are among those most at risk in terms of health and poverty. <i>ESRI Report 2007.</i>
2. Men and women are at the same risk of poverty.	False. 7.5% of females compared with 6.4% of males are in consistent poverty. <i>2005 EU-SILC Survey</i>
3. Ireland has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the European Union (EU).	True. 1 in 5 children lives in income poverty and 1 in 10 in consistent poverty. <i>Combat Poverty Agency Tackling Child Poverty 2006</i>
4. A lot of people who are unemployed for a long time have never been to secondary school.	True. Fewer than 50% of the long-term unemployed have at most attained primary education. Educational attainment determines both access to employment and the level of income derived from employment. <i>NESF Forum Report No. 24. Early School Leaving</i>
5. Well-off people are healthier and live longer than people who experience poverty.	True. People who experience consistent poverty get sick more often and die younger. This is due to a number of reasons such as poor nutrition, access to health services, stress, low self-esteem, poor quality or damp housing. <i>NAPS Working Group Report. Equity and Access to Health Services</i>
6. A baby born to a Traveller family has the same chances of survival as a baby born to a settled family.	False. Traveller infant mortality rates are over twice those of the settled community and Travellers have a general health status which is much lower than for members of the settled community. <i>2005 EU-SILC Survey</i>
7. Education is the key to finding secure employment.	True. Early school leavers with no qualifications are at a high risk of poverty and unemployment. About 20% leave the education system with no or poor qualifications each year. <i>Combat Poverty Agency Poverty Briefing No. 7 Unemployment and Poverty</i>
8. A person is more at risk of experiencing poverty if he or she lives in a large city.	False. Rural countryside and villages have slightly higher levels of poverty than other areas. <i>2005 EU-SILC Survey</i>
9. Ireland is one of the most unequal countries in the EU when it comes to income.	True. The top income group has almost 5 times more income than the bottom. <i>2005 EU-SILC Survey</i>
10. The gap between rich and poor has increased as Ireland has become wealthier.	True: The top 10 per cent of households enjoyed 14 times more disposable income each week than the bottom 10 per cent. <i>Central Statistics Office, Household Budget Survey 2004/2005</i>

Activity 18:

Forty Shades of Gr€€n

Aims

- To initiate thought and discussion on poverty as a national issue.
- To demonstrate the impact of the media on the image portrayed of a place or issue.

Materials

- One copy of Activity Sheet 18 'Forty Shades of Gr€€n' per student or group

Method

1. Distribute copies of Activity Sheet 18 *Forty Shades of Gr€€n*. Read and discuss the newspaper headlines either as a whole class group or small group activity.
2. Guide discussion on the points outlined below:
 - Use one word to describe the image of Ireland presented by the newspaper headlines. Write these words on the board and review them in their entirety when each student has spoken.
 - Is this image of Ireland realistic? Why?
 - If this were the only information you had about this country how would you feel about coming to live in Ireland (a) if you were wealthy and (b) if you were poor?
 - Do you think the title '*Forty Shades of Gr€€n*' is suitable? Why? What do you think the message is behind this title?
 - Having completed this and/or the previous true or false activity, do you think that poverty is an important national issue for Ireland? Why?
 - Choose one headline, which sums up the level of poverty in Ireland today.

Further activities

- Carry out a media tracking exercise on poverty or an issue related to poverty in Ireland. Demonstrate how the media can influence perception on an issue.
- Choose one of the newspaper headlines. Imagine you are the journalist who wrote it. Now write the article that accompanies the headline.

Activity 19:

Poverty – Ireland Responds

Aims

- To provide students with a broad understanding of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) as a national response to poverty in Ireland.
- To illustrate some of the targets, initiatives and principles under the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion).
- To aid students in understanding the impact of national programmes such as the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) on individual life.
- To develop skills of critical thinking by assessing the effectiveness of certain initiatives for different people.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheets 19 'National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) Facts', 'The NAPinclusion Road out of Poverty', 'NAPinclusion At Work' for each student
- Role cards for each group of students

Method

1. Introduce this activity by explaining that it relates to how the government is responding to poverty.
2. As a whole class activity read and discuss Activity Sheet 19 'National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) Facts'.
3. Divide the class into groups and distribute a copy of Activity Sheets 19 'NAPinclusion Road out of Poverty' and 'NAPinclusion at Work' and give one role card to each group.
4. Allow some time for the groups to read about the character in the role cards before asking them to complete Activity Sheet 19 'NAPinclusion at Work'.
5. Each group must decide how the NAPinclusion will impact upon the character in question by applying each of the sign posts (National Action Plan for Social Inclusion targets) and road signs (National Action Plan for Social Inclusion

initiatives) to the person. The worksheet 'NAPinclusion at Work' will serve to focus this group work activity.

6. Complete the exercise by asking each group to feedback what impact they think the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion will have on the life of the character in the role cards.
7. Discuss similarities in feedback between groups. Ask for suggestions on what initiatives would improve these lives.

Further activities

- Contact the following national organisations and find out what they have to say about the effectiveness of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion):
 - » Irish Traveller Movement or Pavee Point
 - » National Council on Ageing and Older People
 - » Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed
 - » OPEN – One Parent Exchange Network
- Profile the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the Minister in charge. This department co-ordinates the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion).
 - » What does this department do?
 - » How is it funded?
 - » How does it relate to the lives of Mary, Noel, Marie and Laura?
- Carry out research on social welfare allowances, for example, for unemployment, lone parents, pensions, etc. Estimate the weekly expenditure for a family of two adults and four children.
 - » Compare the allowance with the weekly income.
- Contact a local TD or the headquarters of the various political parties and find out what each party has to say about poverty in Ireland. Where do they stand on the issue and what do they think should be done about the issue?

Section 5

Planning for Community Work Experience and a Poverty Awareness Project

Aims

- To prepare students for their community work experience.
- To introduce students to the different types of local community groups and organisations and the different support and/or services they provide.
- To highlight active citizenship in community involvement and participation.
- To provide students with the opportunity to explore and design poverty awareness projects.

Attitudes & Values

- An appreciation for the work of local groups and organisations responding to poverty and social exclusion issues
- A commitment to active, constructive, participative citizenship

Knowledge

- Community groups, projects and organisations
- Awareness-raising actions

Skills

- Communication
- Identification/Awareness
- Action

Activity 20:

Responses to Poverty at National and Local Level

Aims

- To engage students in an examination of key responses to poverty and inequality in Ireland at national, local and individual levels.
- To encourage students to find out what kind of responses to poverty and social exclusion exist in their local area and beyond and who is making the response.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 20 '*Responses to Poverty at National and Local Level?*'
- A copy of student information sheet '*Responses to Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ireland*'

Method

1. Introduce this activity by explaining that it relates to exploring the different organisations/groups/programmes that could be in an area and who are responding to poverty issues in a variety of ways.
2. As a whole class activity read and discuss the student information sheet: '*Responses to Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ireland*', seeing if students have ever heard of any of the groups/programmes mentioned and also if they know of individual people who volunteer or take part in activities related to poverty awareness and inequality.
3. Divide the class into pairs and distribute a copy of Activity Sheet 20 '*Responses to Poverty at National and Local Level*'.
4. Each pair research groups/organisations using the internet. Activity Sheet 20 '*Responses to Poverty at National and Local Level*' will serve to focus this activity.
5. Complete the exercise by asking each pair to feedback what they found out about an organisation/group/programme.
6. Discuss similarities and differences in the

service and support which the different groups/organisations provide.

7. Discuss which organisations/programmes are concerned with influencing government policy.

Teacher Notes

Responses to poverty can be categorised under five specific headings:

- National government or state responses
- Local government responses
- Community development responses
- Non-governmental responses
- Responses by individuals

Many students will be familiar with NGOs such as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Barnardos etc, but may not be aware of state-funded responses to poverty through the different programmes listed in Activity Sheet 20. It is only intended here that students are aware of such programmes as they may come across them when researching what kind of anti-poverty initiatives exist in their area, in preparation for community work experience.

Activity 21:

How do you level the playing pitch?

Aims

- To encourage students to look at the type of work that organisations with an anti-poverty focus might engage in and investigate the focus of their work.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 21 for each student
'How do you level the playing pitch?'

Method

1. In groups students investigate different organisations/groups to discover the focus of their anti-poverty strategy/work with a view to choosing an organisation appropriate to community work experience for this Transition Unit.

Activity 22:

Choosing Your Community Work Experience

Aim

- To focus students on the organisation or group they would like to carry out their work experience placement with.
- To provide examples to students of a letter of application for work experience.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 22 '*Choosing Your Community Work Experience Placement*'
- A copy of Activity 22 '*Sample Letter*'

Method

1. Distribute to students Activity Sheet 22 '*Choosing Your Community Work Experience*' and ask them to complete the questions. They should reflect on the research they have carried out in the previous activities.
2. Distribute sample letter. Students then draft a letter to the organisation they are interested in working with. The sample letter can be used as a guideline. A brainstorm of other information to include could be undertaken before the letters are written.
3. Students post or email the letters to the organisation.
4. Discuss with students how they might follow up on the work experience (e.g. phone the organisation in one week if they have not received a reply etc).

Activity 23:

Community Work Experience Diary

Aims

- To familiarise students with the Community Work Experience Diary.
- To explain and clarify the kind of information the students will need to gather during their work experience.

Materials

- A copy of the Community Work Experience Diary for each student

Method

1. Distribute Community Work Experience Diary.
2. Discuss each section of the diary with students and clarify any questions that they are unsure of. Draw attention to the question on confidentiality and brainstorm as to why this is important.
3. Highlight to students that this diary will be the basis of their class presentation when they return from work experience.

Activity 24:

Action on Poverty

Aim

- To introduce to students the variety of actions they could undertake as part of a poverty awareness-raising exercise.
- To encourage students to undertake a school/community poverty awareness action.
- To support students to evaluate the actions which they undertake.

Materials

- A copy of Activity Sheet 24 'Action on Poverty' for each student
- A copy of Activity Sheet 24 'Your Action on Poverty'
- A copy of Activity Sheet 24 'Evaluating the Action'
- Markers
- Large sheets of paper (optional)

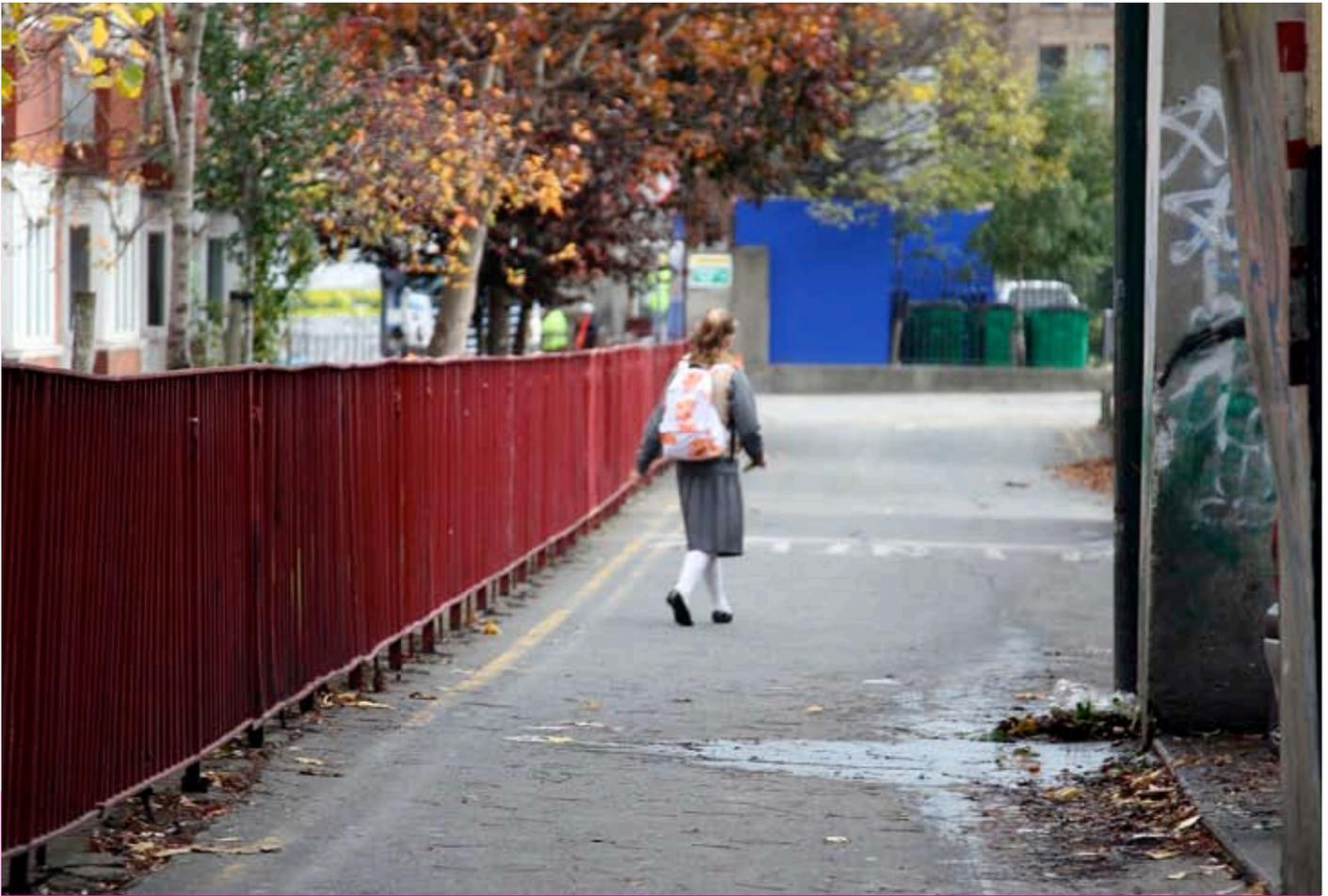
Method

1. Distribute activity sheets to students.
2. Using Activity Sheet 24 'Action on Poverty' students identify and list the different actions that the students in both schools undertook as part of their YSI project.
3. Using Activity Sheet 24 'Your Action on Poverty' students in groups brainstorm other possible poverty awareness actions.
4. Each group gives feedback on their brainstorm – ideas could be put up on the board or students could put ideas on large sheets of paper on the classroom wall.
5. Each group chooses one poverty awareness action they would like to carry out and each group's idea is noted on the board.
6. Each student votes on the poverty awareness action they would like the class to undertake.
7. Students organise themselves into groups to carry out the action. (All students who have completed the CSPE action project in junior cycle will be familiar with this approach).

8. When the action has taken place, students will evaluate the action.
9. Students can work in small groups and complete Activity Sheet 24 'Evaluating the Action'. Focus the discussion on what they would do differently and what they learned.

Note to Teachers

The YSI projects are there as examples of the variety of possible actions that students could undertake. As part of this Transition Unit students would not be expected to undertake such extensive action on poverty.



Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch?

Student Activity Sheets

Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch?

Student Activity Sheets

Activity Sheet 1

Ground Rules

Complete the ground rule sheet below as agreed by all members of the class. A copy could be displayed on the classroom wall.

Our Ground Rules

A large rectangular area enclosed by a dotted pink border, containing 15 horizontal dotted lines for writing ground rules.

Activity Sheet 2

Labelling

Think about the words that are sometimes used to describe young people. Circle any of the words below that are used about young people.

- Use a red pen to write the name of the person who uses this word.
- Use a blue pen to write a few words that you think explain why they use this word.
- Use a black pen or pencil to write in words to describe how this word makes you feel.

There is one example done to show you how to do this



Activity Sheet 3

Images

After choosing your photograph, spend a few minutes filling out this work sheet.

I chose an image of

(Poverty/Wealth)

Describe what you see in the photograph

I think this photograph is about

(Poverty/Wealth)

because

Activity Sheet 3

Images

1



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2



© Derek Speirs/Report

Activity Sheet 3

Images

3



© Derek Speirs/Report

4



© Derek Speirs/Report

Activity Sheet 3

Images

5



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Activity Sheet 3

Images

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Activity Sheet 3

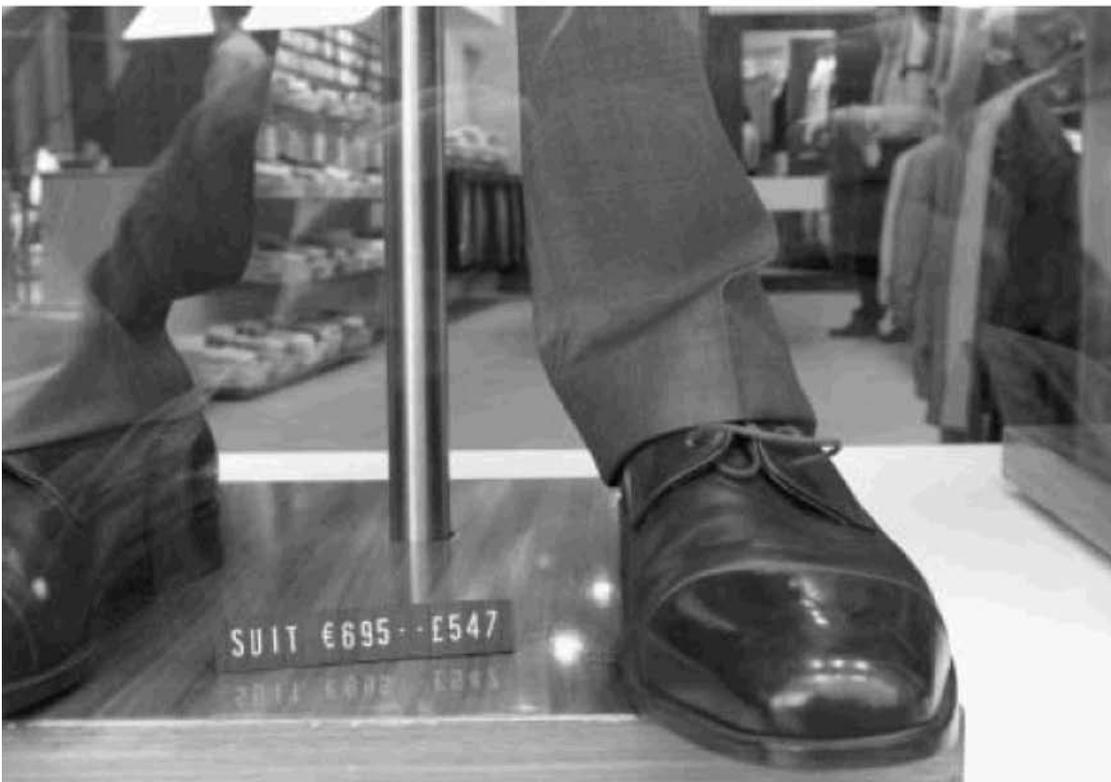
Images

9



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10



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Activity Sheet 3

Images

11



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Activity Sheet 3

Images

13



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Activity Sheet 3

Images

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Activity Sheet 3

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Activity Sheet 3

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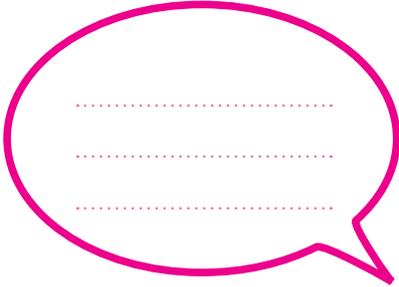
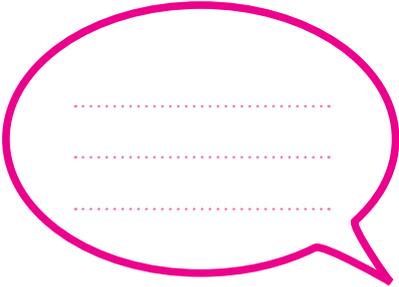
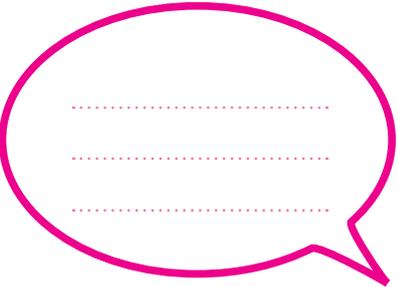
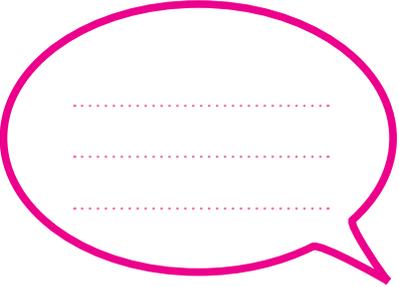
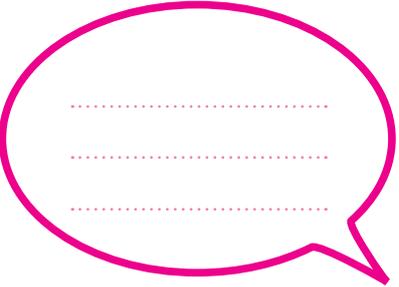
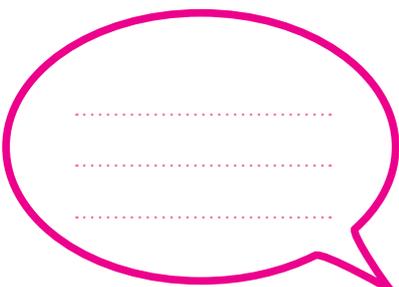
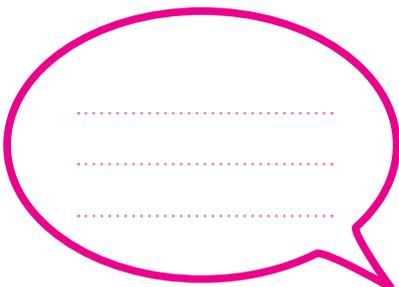
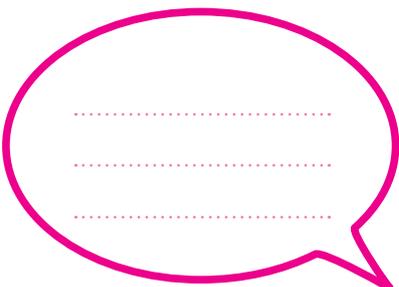
Activity Sheet 4

Poverty is...?

Think about the images of poverty you made use of in class. Now try to fill in as many boxes as possible with words or sentences about poverty. Use the words below to help you.

Remember

Try to think of poverty as being more than just about not having enough money.

Use these words to help you.

Money // Health // Home // Feeling // Hopeless // Despair // Food
Clothes // Human Rights // Hope // Education // Social Life // Choice
Friends // Heating // Jobs // Holidays // Belonging // Happiness

Activity Sheet 5

'It's all Relative'



Activity Sheet 5

Case Studies

Jackie's Case

Jackie is 16 years of age and has been homeless for 9 months. Some nights she gets a bed in a hostel or a squat, but most of the time she sleeps with her friends in the porch of the Corporation Buildings along Dublin's quays. She begs to get money because she's too young to get social welfare. There are very few days that Jackie eats three meals.

Angela and Mick's Case

Angela and Mick live on a small farm in Co. Mayo. They earn a very small income from the farm and this is added to the money they get from social welfare. Lately they've had to cut down on their heating. They don't heat the bedrooms any more because it costs too much. They have also stopped going out and having friends over. They find the cost of living going up too quickly compared to their income. They have to tell their son, Conor, that he can't go on the school trip this year. It would have meant that they would have to borrow the money for it.

Jessica's case

Jessica is 13 and started secondary school this year. Sometimes she is quiet and withdrawn because she doesn't feel as good as others in her class. There are two girls in her class who are always showing off, telling everyone where they are going on their holidays, or what expensive clothes or sports gear they got at the weekend. They even ask others how much pocket money they get. When this starts Jessica makes sure she stays out of the conversation. Pocket money is a luxury her mother can't afford as well as holidays and expensive clothes. Jessica wouldn't mind so much only they make fun of her and another girl in her class who lives on her estate.

What do you think about these cases?

Activity Sheet 7

Story Cards – Who does Poverty Effect?

NOEL STORY

I'm Noel. I'm married to Anne and we have five children. I lost my job a few years ago. I don't look for work any more as I got sick of being told I was too old – I'm 48 not 73! It gets me down a lot. You lose respect for yourself when you're on the dole all the time. My family now owes a lot of money because we had to borrow from a loan man to pay back rent and to pay for school books and uniforms. We don't have enough money to get by.

LYNSEY'S STORY

I'm Lynsey. I'm 24 and I have two children. It really gets to me sometimes when I hear people giving out about single mothers, and saying that the only reason they get pregnant is to get a flat or a house. My youngest child has asthma. The damp in the house is so bad that the walls are wet. The child is always sick. I have to take what I'm given because after all I am only a single mum!

MARIE'S STORY

I'm Marie. I live with my five children. My husband left eight years ago and doesn't help with money or anything anymore. We've had to live on social welfare. I hate feeling like I'm living on charity. We never have enough to get by. We rob Peter to pay Paul. There's never enough money for proper food. We have often gone without heat on cold days. I feel under pressure all the time.

MICHAEL'S STORY

I'm Michael and I have a disability. The funny thing is I can do most things 'able-bodied' people do. Even still I'm not treated equally. I realised when I was very young that I had to work harder than children who did not have a disability – just to be accepted. I'd love to get a job. People think I can't do the job because of my disability. They never give me a chance to show that I could be just as good as/or better than other people.

Activity Sheet 7

Story Cards – Who does Poverty Effect? continued

AISLING'S STORY

I'm Aisling. I'm 20 and I've been living in Dublin for two years. I come from a small town. Some people were very nasty to me when I was younger. It made it hard for me to work at school. I had to leave home because my parents were ashamed of me because I'm a lesbian. I got a job, so I can just about pay my rent and bills. I've made some good friends who give me a lot of support. My boss says that if I stick with this job I could work my way up. But from the things he says about gay people I don't think I'd be here for too long if he knew about me.

JESSICA'S STORY

I'm Jessica. Some people in our school can have anything they want: holidays; fancy clothes; jewellery; and sports gear. They are always showing off. In our family we don't have those things because my dad is out of work and my mam gets low wages doing her job as a cleaner.

MICK'S STORY

I'm Mick. I live with my wife Angela and our four children. All the kids are still going to school. Even though we have a small farm we still have to get money from social welfare to survive. It gets harder and harder to get by. Last month we got a grant for the farm, but as soon as the social welfare heard of it they cut our money so we were back to square one again. It's always the same. They give money to you with one hand and take it away with the other!

PAULA'S STORY

I'm Paula. I remember when I was a kid and I thought I'd live in a lovely house when I got older - have nice clothes and a car and all. I must have been a fool - I'm 16 and at the stage where I don't even want to be alive! It wrecks your head being homeless. Anything can happen to you when you're on the streets.

LAURA'S STORY

I'm Laura. I'm 17 and left school when I was 11. I didn't like school because no one treated you right. No one treated you with respect. Settled people call us names. They think we've got diseases... I'd like to be treated equally. I'd like to stop the name-calling. I'm proud to be a Traveller.

Activity Sheet 7

Story Cards – Who does Poverty Effect? continued

MARY'S STORY

I'm Mary. I live on the 4th floor of a block of flats. I was supposed to be moved out of here long ago. I have been trapped twice in the lifts and now I'm terrified to use them. My home has become a prison and I often stay in for days without seeing anyone or getting out to the shops for bread and milk.

CHINEDU'S STORY

I'm Chinedu. I'm from Nigeria. My family came to Ireland to get away from the violence in our country. We heard that there were lots of jobs and that you could have a good safe life. It hasn't been like that for us. We live in a hostel and my parents are not allowed to work as we wait for the Irish government to decide if we can live here or not.

JASON'S STORY

I'm Jason. I guess you could say I come from the 'wrong part' of town. I'm nearly 17 and don't have much of a future by the looks of things. Some people look down on us, because of where we come from and employers won't give us jobs because of our address. In the evenings we hang around the streets and then we get hassle from the guards because they think everyone from our area is up to no good. I guess we're second-class citizens.

Activity Sheet 7

Who and How?

Story No.	Name	Group	How Does Poverty Affect their Lives?
7.	Mick	Small Farmer	I think Mick is angry because money is tight and no one seems to care. They find it hard to survive. People think they have a farm so they're ok.

Activity Sheet 7

What is Poverty?

On the spider's web, write in words to describe how poverty affects people.
Tip! Use some of the words that were listed in class today and add some more.



Do you think the spider's web is a good drawing for describing what poverty is? Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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Activity Sheet 8

Possible Causes of Poverty

The bricks in this wall stand for things that cause poverty. Write in other causes if you can think of ones that are not here.

Discuss these with members of your class and your teacher. Do you agree with the causes that are listed here? Circle the 3 bricks that you think cause the most poverty.

Family Background (Jobs and Education)		Being able to read and write		Government helping better-off people	
Power and wealth	Being judged on where you live		Feeling that you have no power		Having no job
Having a badly paid job		People not being treated the same (Inequality)		Not many jobs in the countryside	
Being sick	Discrimination	Well-off people don't care		Leaving school early	
Lack of quality childcare	Tax system favours the 'better-off'		Owing a lot of money	People get too many handouts	
Lack of accessible transport		Having a disability	Prejudice	Valuing yourself and your ability	
Not having enough money	Poor farming land		Discrimination based on who you are and where you're from	Lack of government money spent on services like health and education	

Activity Sheet 8

Newspaper Article

Extract from Irish Times 'Three families living on the edge' articles

Irish Times Fri, Dec 22, 2006

A working family

Despite working as a special needs assistant, Marie reckons her take-home pay isn't much different to what she would get if she was on welfare.

With a teenage son and daughter still living at home and a husband who has been incapacitated since he received a heart transplant in the 1980s, the €430 a week she brings home is swallowed up rapidly.

"I find it very, very hard. When you have to pay rent, ESB, phone bills and shopping bills, there's barely anything left," says Marie, who lives in Tallaght, Co Dublin.

Christmas is especially hard, no matter how much planning she does. It's even tougher now that her kids are teenagers, she says.

"Teenagers are expensive. One of my sons is 17. He takes size 11 shoes. He's not a child, even though he's classified as one. He wears men's clothes and shoes, which are more expensive," she says. "They're growing men and women. It takes a lot of money to feed and clothe them."

If Marie was on welfare she might have a similar income, given the rent, fuel and back-to-school allowance available. But she says working is vitally important to her. "I might get more on welfare benefit, who knows, but working is important. It gets you out of the house and gives you a lease of life."

After spending several years living on State welfare, she is now trying to pay off loans she took out to help meet day-to-day costs. The most important thing to her is ensuring her children have the best chance in life.

"You end up going without to ensure your kids are involved in sport and various activities. In this day and age you've got to keep them occupied and have something for them to do."

A lone parent

Miriam (32) has taken out a €2,500 loan to pay for Christmas, clear her debts and pay her utility bills. She is determined to have enough money this year, unlike last Christmas when her children didn't get the presents they asked for.

"Last year my oldest daughter wanted a new bike, but I couldn't afford it. I felt terrible on Christmas Day. You want to see their eyes light up - except she was so disappointed. I don't want to repeat

Activity Sheet 8

Newspaper Article continued

that this year,” she says.

This year she has enough to get a Bratz TV/DVD player for her daughter and a Spiderman TV for her son.

Miriam, who receives the lone parent’s allowance of just over €200 a week and child maintenance of around €130, is determined to escape what she sees as the poverty trap of lone parenthood by getting a good job.

While she left secondary school early, she has since completed a third-level access programme and is in the process of completing a degree course. It has only been possible through the assistance of St Vincent de Paul, she says. “When I was looking for a third-level grant, I kept getting a sneering kind of attitude. It was like, ‘this is your box, and don’t think about trying to get out of it’.

“I’ve been laughed out of banks trying to get loans. I was only able to get a loan this time because I’m technically a student. A lot of the time it feels like there is no escape. The attitude seems to be that you will always live hand to mouth.”

If she doesn’t get a third-level qualification, she figures it would hardly be worthwhile to work, given the salary levels. However, if she qualifies, she feels her prospects will be much better.

“I look through the Evening Herald some days and look at the salaries for positions like legal secretaries, starting at €35,000. That keeps me going. I just don’t want to end up like my mam, crying in frustration over ESB bills that I can’t pay.”

Activity Sheet 8

Against the Odds

Using the newspaper article, see can you identify five causes and four effects of experiencing poverty? List the causes in relation to both stories.

CAUSES	EFFECTS
<p>Marie's Story</p>	
<p>Miriam's Story</p>	

Activity Sheet 9

Maslow's Pyramid of Needs

Abraham Maslow was a psychologist who thought that people grew and developed when their needs were met. He believed that human beings do their best to reach their potential. He set out his beliefs in the shape of a pyramid. Each person starts at the bottom of the pyramid. When one type of need is met the person is motivated to reach the next highest level. For example, if a person does not have food to eat they are not concerned with whether they are loved or not. Not everyone agrees with Maslow. Do you?

Write the needs listed to the left of the pyramid into the level of the pyramid to which you think they belong.

Maslow's Pyramid of Needs

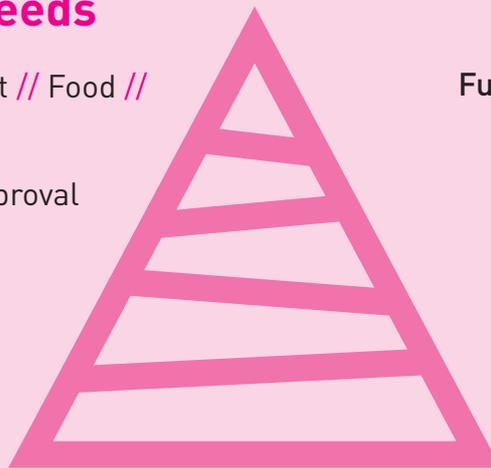
Warmth // Belonging // Self-respect // Food //
Respect from others // Water

Affection // To love & be loved // Approval
from others

Self-confidence // Shelter

Being my true self

Air // Rest // Out of Danger



Full human potential

Self-value needs

Belonging needs

Safety needs

Survival needs

Where on Maslow's pyramid of needs do you think Jack and Jessica's stories lie?

JACKIE'S CASE

Jackie is sixteen years of age and has been homeless for nine months. Some nights she gets a bed in a hostel or a squat, but most of the time she sleeps with her friends in the porch of the Corporation Buildings along Dublin's quays. She begs to get money because she's too young to get social welfare. There are very few days that Jackie eats three meals.

JESSICA'S CASE

Jessica is 13 and started secondary school this year. Sometimes she is quiet and withdrawn because she doesn't feel as good as others in her class. There are two girls in her class who are always showing off, telling everyone where they're going on their holidays, or what expensive clothes or sports gear they got at the weekend. They even ask others how much pocket money they get. When this starts Jessica makes sure she stays out of the conversation. Pocket money is a luxury her mother can't afford as well as holidays and expensive clothes. Jessica wouldn't mind so much only they make fun of her and another girl in her class who lives on her estate.

Activity Sheet 10

In the News

Extract from:

No man's land where you cannot work and must live on €19 a week

Irish Times Wed, Jun 06, 2007

This morning there's a queue at the post office when Adanna arrives. There are a few Irish people ahead of her, but most are women from her own hostel, here to observe the same weekly ritual. The cashier moves quickly, silently, and the line keeps moving.

Adanna takes her €19.10, thanks the cashier, tucks the cash carefully into her purse and makes for the door. "My €19 million," she says with an embarrassed smile.

Every cent of this, her weekly income, is as good as spent. Because the food in the hostel upsets her stomach, Adanna buys the ingredients and prepares her own meals in the evenings. The rest goes on toothpaste, cosmetics and the odd bus journey.

Adanna, an intelligent, attractive and soft-spoken woman in her early 30s, worked in public relations before she left Nigeria and came to Ireland alone almost two years ago, but as an asylum seeker here she is barred from work and full-time study.

"What do you do, lying on the bed from morning til evening?" she asks evenly. "You can't go to any place. Even if you go out it's just to while away time.

"I think the Government is doing its best, but they remind you of who you are. I would love to go to school - I would love to - but I cannot because of my status.

"I don't want to be a nuisance to the society. What can one do? This is the situation we find ourselves in. As an asylum seeker you don't have a say."

In November 1999, Liz O'Donnell - then Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs - caused controversy when she described Ireland's asylum system as a "shambles" and the Department of Justice's policies in the area as "unplanned, unregulated and unsuccessful". At the time there was a backlog of 8,500 asylum applicants waiting for a decision on their cases, and every morning long queues fanned out from the Refugee Application Centre on Lower Mount Street in Dublin.

Some 7,724 people claimed asylum in the Republic in 1999. The annual total was to peak at 11,634 three years later and has been falling ever since: last year fewer than 4,500 applications were made. Despite a disproportionate public focus that has lingered since the hysteria of the 1990s, today asylum seekers are one of our smallest immigrant contingents.

The number of Poles who were issued with PPS numbers in the first two months of this year is almost twice the total number of people who sought asylum here in 2006.

Activity Sheet 10

In the News continued

The controversy that O'Donnell's remarks generated was to be a turning point, however, and in the two years that followed serious investment was made in the State's asylum infrastructure.

Additional staff were made available to process applications, the Government drafted a National Action Plan against Racism and the whole system was overhauled.

The new scheme's centrepiece was "direct provision", under which asylum seekers are provided with accommodation, meals and a weekly allowance of €19.10 per adult and €9.60 per child. Since 2004, asylum seeker children have also been denied child benefit.

The changes solved some problems but also created new ones. By preventing people from working and providing them instead with a nominal sum - the stipend has been frozen since 2000 - NGOs argue asylum seekers are left to languish in poverty.

While delays in hearing initial asylum applications have been reduced - applicants are now being interviewed within nine to 12 days of making their application - those who, having been refused asylum, apply to the Minister for Justice for "leave to remain" (permission to stay in Ireland) can still be left waiting for several years before a decision is made on their status.

As a result they inhabit a social no man's land, putting down roots in a community but constrained from working, studying or fully participating in society.

Nobuhle Nduka, development officer with Akidwa, the Dublin-based African women's network, says she knows one woman who has been in the direct provision system for five years. She and her children have been moved regularly between accommodation centres and each time they are moved the kids have to be taken out of one school and placed in another.

Though charities help, Nduka says the system puts enormous strain on families by denying them any route out of their hardship.

"People get very stressed. If the food is no good [in a hostel], some of the women actually take the €19 and try to buy food for their children. They are already under strain because of the toiletries they have to buy and the transport they have to pay for. . . It's a poverty trap.

"The direct provision system is based on segregation. It discourages integration by all means. With €19 you can't even take your children to a movie, you can't take them to McDonald's like the other children. You can't do anything with €19."

Ruadhán Mac Cormaic © 2007 The Irish Times

Activity Sheet 11

Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In 1948 the governments of the world came together in Geneva and agreed to the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'. The document lists out the rights to which everyone is entitled. It states that all human beings whatever race, colour, nationality, sex, political or other beliefs, however much money or property they have are entitled to the same human rights.

It states that everyone:

- Is born free and equal
- Is free to think and say what they want
- Has the right to work, to health and to education
- Has the right to a decent standard of living, including basic needs such as housing and food, as well as the right to rest and leisure and holiday from time to time
- Has a duty to support and serve his or her community
- Will not be held in slavery or be tortured or arrested illegally
- Is equal in the eyes of the law and has the right to be protected equally by the law
- Has the right to a nationality
- Has the right to asylum in other countries to escape from persecution

The declaration also says that nothing in the declaration can be used as an excuse for any person or group to do things that might endanger the rights and freedom of others.

Un Convention on the Rights of the Child

In 1992 Ireland signed up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. By doing this the Irish government made a promise to all children in Ireland that our society will respect children's rights and make every effort to satisfy children's needs and nurture their potential.

The convention says that every child under 18 years of age has the right to:

- Be treated equally regardless of race, colour, sex or religion or any other reason
- Develop physically and mentally in a healthy manner
- A name and nationality
- Adequate food, housing and medical services
- Special care if the child has a disability
- Be loved, understood and protected
- Free education, to play and to recreation
- Protection from any form of neglect, cruelty and exploitation

Activity Sheet 12

Standing up for their Rights

Read these stories about people standing up for their rights. Then answer the questions that follow

Story 1: Ryanair

The Equality Authority took a case against Ryanair because of an advertisement they printed looking for staff. The Authority believed that the advert was unfair and discriminated against older or middle aged people because it had the word 'young' in it twice. It is against the law to discriminate on the basis of age in Ireland. This means that a company cannot look for old or young people. The Equality Authority won the case.

Story 2: Tesco

Ann McDonagh won her case against Tesco Ireland Ltd. She took the case because the Manager of the supermarket asked her to leave the shop. She believed that the only reason this happened was because she is a Traveller. Tesco was unable to give a good reason why Ms McDonagh was asked to leave the shop and it lost the case. In Ireland it is against the law to treat someone unfairly because he or she is a member of the Travelling Community

What rights were in question in each story?

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.....

The stories explain that it is against the law to discriminate against people for certain reasons. What are the grounds in each story?

.....

.....

.....

.....

In Ireland it is illegal to discriminate against someone for the following nine grounds. Can you name them? Check out the Equality Authority website to see are you right.
www.equality.ie

.....

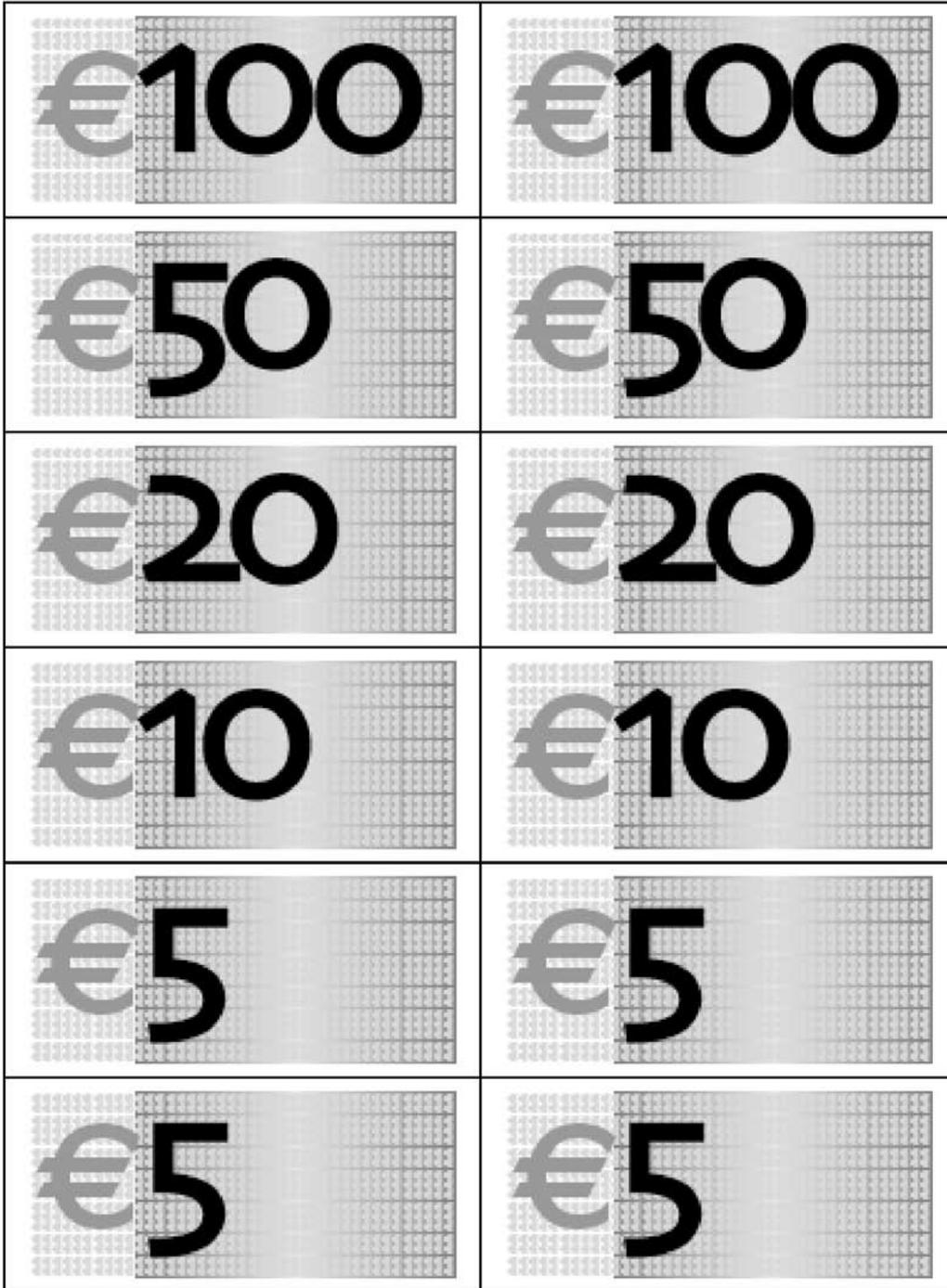
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Activity Sheet 13

Auction Money



Photocopy 5 copies of this sheet for each group. Deduct one €100 note and 2 €20 notes from each bundle to arrive at €1000 per group.

Activity Sheet 13

Rights Auction Scenario

You are a member of a group that gives advice to the Minister for Health and Children. Your aim is to get the best possible future for Jackie. You will reach this aim by buying the rights that you think will give Jackie a good future. For every right you get the Minister has promised it will be fulfilled in Jackie's case and in the case of all young people who are out of home.

With the members of your group you should discuss what human rights are most important for Jackie and in what order. You have five to ten minutes to decide what rights you will bid for in the auction. You will have to bid against the other group to try and buy these rights.

You should decide now which rights you think are most important to Jackie.

Jackie's situation

Jackie is 16 and has been out of home for the past nine months. There were a lot of family problems when she was growing up and because of that she spent a lot of time in foster care.

- She can't read or write properly because she missed a lot of school due to all the disruption caused by her family's problems. She stopped going to school when she was 12.
- She abuses drugs and alcohol.
- She doesn't think anyone cares what happens to her.
- She always feels unsafe and fears for her safety.

Activity Sheet 14

Types of Communities

Geographical Communities	Special Interests/Common Identity Communities

Choose one of the communities you have listed above and outline what you think are the particular needs of this community. (The word box below could help you)

Accommodation // Health // Education
Work // Language // Religion // Cultural
Leisure activities // Childcare

Activity Sheet 15

Giant Steps Statement

It is likely that you will do your leaving certificate

You could go to college when you finish school

You can communicate in your own language

When you are sick you can go to your doctor

You can live with your family at home

You can join any group you like

You have a secure home

You feel that you belong

You have enough to eat and drink

You get plenty of extra help whenever you need it

You get involved in things happening in your community

You like living where you live, its a nice, clean environment

You can be yourself without being slagged or made feel different

You are looking forward to your life ahead and your future is pretty secure

You are a member of at least one local group, sports team, organisation, etc.

You can easily socialise with your friends like going to discos, the cinema, etc.

You get most things that you ask for at home, like clothes, shoes, books, cds, etc.

You can practice your religion easily

Activity Sheet 15

Giant Steps Role Cards

1 MICHAEL, 14

You live in a trailer on a temporary halting site with your mother and father and four brothers and sisters. The site is not good. There are no toilet or washing facilities and only one tap between eleven families. There was supposed to be a permanent site built but the local people are objecting to it. You're always getting slagged at school because of your accent and some of the other students call you names. They say your Dad is a waster but it's not his fault he can't get a job. Nobody will give a job to a traveller. You're in first year now but you don't go to school often because you don't feel that you fit in.

2 JOE, 13

You have two brothers and one sister, they are aged between 16 and 7 years old. You live in a large county council estate in Waterford. Your Father is 42 and has been unemployed for as long as you can remember. Your mother works as a cleaner, but doesn't get paid much. You plan on leaving school after your Junior Cert so that you can get a job. You already work part-time collecting shopping trolleys, you give three-quarters of what you earn to your mother.

3 HELEN, 16

You have two sisters and a brother and you live in Galway in a nice big house overlooking the sea. Your mother is the accountant in the company that your father manages. You have your own room and because you are the oldest and going into 5th year you have your own computer in your room to help you in your studying. You are planning to go to university after your Leaving Cert and would like to study languages. You've gone on two summer exchanges to France and Italy to learn the languages and you're going to Irish College over the summer to brush up on your Irish. Your class is going to Switzerland on a skiing trip next term.

4 JACKIE, 16

You spent a lot of your childhood in care due to family difficulties. You've been living on the street for the past nine months. You have a drug habit. You can't read or write properly because you missed a lot of school over the years due to all the family problems. You left school when you were 12. You don't see any hope for yourself out of your situation, you don't think anyone cares.

Activity Sheet 15

Giant Steps Role Cards

5 HASSAN, 15

You are living with your uncle and two brothers in Donegal. You came to Ireland from Algeria two years ago after your parents were killed. You are all waiting to see if the Irish Government will allow you to stay in Ireland as a refugee. You are Muslim and are living in a place that used to be a hotel and get all your meals supplied. You have to leave at 8.30 to be in for school at 8.50 which means that you miss breakfast because the kitchen staff only start at 8.30. There is usually no hot water in the mornings because its on a time switch.

6 KARL, 17

You live with your sister, brother and parents in Limerick. Rugby is really popular and you are a winger on the school team. You really only play it to keep your Dad happy and because it helps you fit in more. After your Junior Cert you kept on Home Economics because you love cooking. Your dream is to become a chef which doesn't go down too well with your Dad or the lads in your class. You get a hard time, they call you 'gay boy' and say that you should spell you name the girl's way, Carol instead of Karl. You can't wait to leave school to get as far away from there as possible.

7 SARAH, 14

You are Deaf. You have to go to a special school 70 miles from your home. You get home once a month to spend time with your family. All your family use sign language and a few times a year you all go to an event organised by members of the Deaf community. There's not much else for you to do in your spare time even though you love sports. Most people treat you as though there is something wrong with you, they don't understand that you just communicate in a different way. You would like to go to college when you leave school but you worry that you won't fit in.

Activity Sheet 15

Giant Steps Role Cards

8 NICOLA, 14

You live with your mother, brother Paul and sisters Serena and Stacy in a flat in Dublin's north side. Your mother would like to work but the cost of childcare is too high so she has to make do on the lone parents allowance. Your father doesn't live with you anymore but he does give 20 from his dole every week to help out. Money is always tight and there is never anything extra for nice clothes or shoes. You find it hard to get your homework done most of the time, not to mention study because you share a bedroom with your sisters and there just isn't enough room for all of you. Your teachers are always telling you that you could do very well if you studied more, but it's not as simple as that.

9 SHANE, 13

You live in Dublin with your parents and two sisters. You are in first year in a fee-paying school. You have to stay back most days for study period. You get extra help with your English two evenings a week because you find it difficult. You are a member of the local karate club and your Dad gets a special rate from his company for the family to be members of the leisure and sports centre. Your Mum works from home running her own interior design business. You love the holidays because then you get to help her. She says that when you're older you could take over the business.

10 CLARE, 15

You live in Roscommon with your parents and older brothers and sisters on a small farm. The farm is near a river that has flooded many times over the past few years. Your family have lost a lot of money due to the floods. Your parents regularly look worried and seem to talk a lot about money. You travel 10 miles to the nearest secondary school. You used to take music lessons after school but you had to give them up as they were too expensive. You would like to study law in college when you leave school - your parents are already worrying about where they are going to get the money to pay for you as your eldest brother is in college already.

Activity Sheet 16

Case Studies

Case Study 1

Knockanrawley Resource Centre

Knockanrawley Resource Centre as a community development project was concerned with meeting the unmet needs of the local community in Tipperary Town and surrounding areas.

The centre is managed by a Voluntary Management Committee comprising volunteers from the local community, all of whom have participated in the activities of the centre.

The centre has five different sections, which are each run by a co-ordinator and staff under the direction of the Centre Director. Each section has a sub-group which includes staff, management and members of the community who use the service/resource.

The five sections are as follows:

Community Development: The community development section provides a process whereby people can develop the necessary confidence, knowledge, skills and attitudes to effect real change in their lives and within their own community.

Training and Education: This section encourages people to continue or restart the process of learning and self-education, providing courses which enhance personal, social, skills and community development.

Psychotherapy and Family Therapy: This section offers assistance and support to couples, families and individuals experiencing stress or difficulties in their lives, and those wishing to enhance their relationships and the quality of their lives.

Organic Garden: The garden generates produce for sale and also acts as a training resource in environmental issues and horticulture.

Daisychain Childcare Centre: The centre provides quality affordable childcare for 100 children ranging from babies to after schools care. This enables parents to avail of training, education and employment opportunities and to participate in the process of Community Development.

Source: www.knockanrawley.ie

Activity Sheet 16

Case Studies

Case Study 2

'Remember Us' Social Group for Special Needs

'Remember Us' was set up as a direct response to a need identified by parents of children with special needs for support and interaction in the community of North Fingal, Dublin. It is an integrated social youth club for young people with special needs, their siblings and friends aged 14–18 plus. 'Remember us' caters for young people with special needs, their families, friends and the wider community of North Fingal, Dublin.

The club has grown from a once-a-week social club to providing programmes four times per week, offering the members a wide variety of activities and outings where they can learn, form friendships, develop their social and life skills, self-esteem and quality of life.

The scope of activities of 'Remember us' includes:

- Providing a vehicle for early development of social skills to combat the effects of isolation and stigma commonly felt by young people with special needs
- Providing an integrated social environment for the young people to learn and form friendships. The presence of non-disabled young people in the club encourages young people with special needs to imitate the actions they observe and in this way increase their own skills in a social and friendly environment. This, along with all the other benefits of 'Remember Us', provides opportunities for the young people to integrate into the wider community through projects such as St. Patrick's Day Parades, eating out in local restaurants, and school/community projects such as 'Not So Different'
- Developing social skills by participation in personal development activities including Stretch and Grow, cookery, computers and independent living skills
- Acting as a support where parents/carers and siblings can relate to each other, share information and access support and advocacy when dealing with specific or difficult situations.

Source: www.balbriggan.net

Activity Sheet 16

Case Studies

Case Study 3

Women as Leaders Equality Programme

The programme is a collaboration between Cairde, which works with ethnic minority communities, and Lourdes Youth and Community Services, a community-based education, training and development project in the north inner city of Dublin.

The objectives of the programme are:

- To improve the capacity of women to be a resource to the community by becoming leaders in addressing racism and accommodating diversity
- To improve employment and further education prospects of minority ethnic women and Irish women
- To equip women with the knowledge and skills for effective leadership to address the links between issues of poverty, social exclusion and racism in the North East Inner City Dublin.

Activities include bringing the two groups together to explore the issues that unite them as women and develop leadership skills for the promotion of an intercultural society.

[Source: Dublin Inner city Partnership – DICE newsletter 2007]

Activity Sheet 16

Case Studies

Case Study 4

LAPSIS in Laois

Laois County Council developed a Local Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy (LAPSIS) to target communities that needed focused supports – young people, isolated older people, lone parents, those affected by educational disadvantage, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and Travellers.

The LAPSIS team set out specific actions to address the needs of various target groups, such as working with/to:

- OPEN, the lone parents' organisation, to set up lone parents' groups. There is now a network of six groups. Group members did democracy training. The team will be working with the county childcare committee to increase affordable childcare, which will allow lone parents to study, train or work if they so choose.
- The council's Arts Office, in conjunction with Travellers, to develop cultural activities, and encourage increased participation in sport. Education and employment are still major issues and the team is working to provide homework supports.
- Integrate members of ethnic minorities. A 'Laois Does Not Do Racism' campaign is planned. The need for more language classes, improved access to services, opportunities to integrate into community groups and youth supports has been identified.
- Raise awareness among public and business bodies of the National Disability Authority's code of practice on disability and public services. The LAPSIS team is looking for pre-school supports for children with disability and to inform parents of services that are available.

[Source: Combat Poverty Action on Poverty Today Summer 2007]

Activity Sheet 16

Communities Taking Action

Case Study Name

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.....

What type of community is this?

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What bonds this community together?

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.....
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Who is involved?

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Why are they involved?

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.....
.....

Who is benefiting?

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.....
.....

Whose needs are being met?

.....
.....
.....

How are they being met?

.....
.....
.....

Do you think this case study is a good example of community development at work? Why? Discuss this with other members of your group.

.....
.....

Activity Sheet 17

A National Issue, True or False

Statement	True	False
1. There is no such thing as a poor farmer.		
2. Men and women are at the same risk of poverty.		
3. Ireland has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the European Union (EU).		
4. A lot of people who are unemployed for a long time have never been to secondary school.		
5. Well-off people are healthier and live longer than people who experience poverty.		
6. A baby born to a Traveller family has the same chances of survival as a baby born to a settled family.		
7. Education is the key to finding secure employment.		
8. A person is more at risk of experiencing poverty if he or she lives in a large city.		
9. Ireland is one of the most unequal countries in the EU when it comes to income.		

Activity Sheet 18

Forty Shades of Gr€€n

CORK HOMELESS CHARITY HAD TO TURN 300 AWAY

Cork Simon Community maximised all their resources to support more than 1,300 people last year but the shelter was still forced to turn away 300 people because of a shortage of facilities, the charity's annual...

Irish Times Article, *Olivia Kelleher*, 12/06/2007

PARTIES IGNORE CHILD RIGHTS, SAYS OUTGOING ISPCC HEAD

No political party is serious about creating a society which puts the rights of children first, the outgoing chief executive of the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) has said. ...

Irish Times Article, *Kitty Holland*, 03/03/2007

CHILD ASYLUM SEEKERS 'VULNERABLE TO POVERTY'

The denial of child benefit to asylum seekers leaves children vulnerable to poverty and impedes their integration, it was argued yesterday. ...

Irish Times Article, *Ruadhan Mac Cormaic*, 31/01/2007

POVERTY AMONG ELDERLY SET TO WORSEN

High rates of relative poverty among older people will get worse as the population ages unless key steps are taken to address their income and housing inadequacy, a study from the Combat Poverty Agency...

Irish Times Article, *Kitty Holland*, 08/05/2007

NUMBER AT RISK OF POVERTY IN IRELAND A 'MATTER OF CONCERN'

The European Commission has warned that figures showing one in five Irish people remain at risk of poverty are a matter for concern. ...

Irish Times Article, *Jamie Smyth in Brussels*, 20/02/2007

CALL FOR MORE LOCAL ACTION ON POVERTY

The Combat Poverty Agency has called for new approaches to support the delivery of national anti-poverty policies at local level. ...

Irish times Article, *Fiona Gartland*, 16/02/2007

HIDDEN HARDSHIP AMID THE BOOM

Work is no guarantee of escaping hardship, and many people on low wages are unable to cope at Christmas, writes Carl O'Brien...

Irish Times Article, 22/12/2006

Activity Sheet 18

Forty Shades of Gr€€n continued

GROWING NUMBER OF LONE PARENT FAMILIES LIVE IN POVERTY

There are now over 150,000 single-parent families in the State, writes Liam Reid.

Irish Times Article, 29/12/2005

PLIGHT OF TRAVELLERS STRESSED IN LATEST REPORT

Half of the Travellers whose deaths were reported to the Parish of the Travelling People in Dublin over a 10-year period died before they reached 39 years of age, according to a study published yesterday. ...

Irish Times Article, *Kitty Holland*, 26/06/2007

WISH YOU LIVED HERE?

Apartments costing up to €30m on a luxury cruise ship will be pitched at Ireland's rich list next week. Michael Parsons reports...

Irish Times Article, 14/06/2007

FOUR IRISH TYCOONS WORTH €8BN IN THE RANKS OF THE SUPER RICH

Ireland's four wealthiest men now have a combined wealth of \$10.6 billion (€8 billion), consolidating their place in the company of the world's ultra-rich. ...

Irish Times Article, *Arthur Beesley*, Senior Business Correspondent, 09/03/2007

HOTEL IN FIVE-STAR WICKLOW LOCATION PUTS ON THE RITZ

The Ritz-Carlton hotel in the salubrious surroundings of Powerscourt will be aimed squarely at the high end of the market, writes Barry O'Halloran...

Irish Times Article, 19/01/2007

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS SPENT €1.2BN BY CREDIT CARD

Christmas shoppers spent €166 million more on their credit cards last December than they did a year previously, an increase of 16 per cent, according to new figures from the Central Bank. ...

Irish Times Article, *Laura Slattery*, 01/02/2007

Activity Sheet 19

National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion)

National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion)

The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) is the government's programme of action to address poverty and social exclusion.

Whats the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion)?



It's a plan to get rid of poverty in the whole country

So what's this plan about?

The aim of the plan is to reduce, and if possible eliminate, consistent poverty in Ireland by 2016. In order to do this the plan has to do a lot of work on these areas:

- Making sure that everyone has enough money (adequate income)
- Making sure everyone who can work has a job (unemployment, especially long-term)
- Making sure that all children and young people do well from education regardless of their family background and making sure that every child gets to go to the right sort of school for them and learns in the way that suits them (educational disadvantage).
- Paying attention to areas in cities and towns (urban areas) where there are a lot of people living in poverty
- Paying attention to people who live in the country (rural areas) and who live in poverty to see if everything is going to plan.

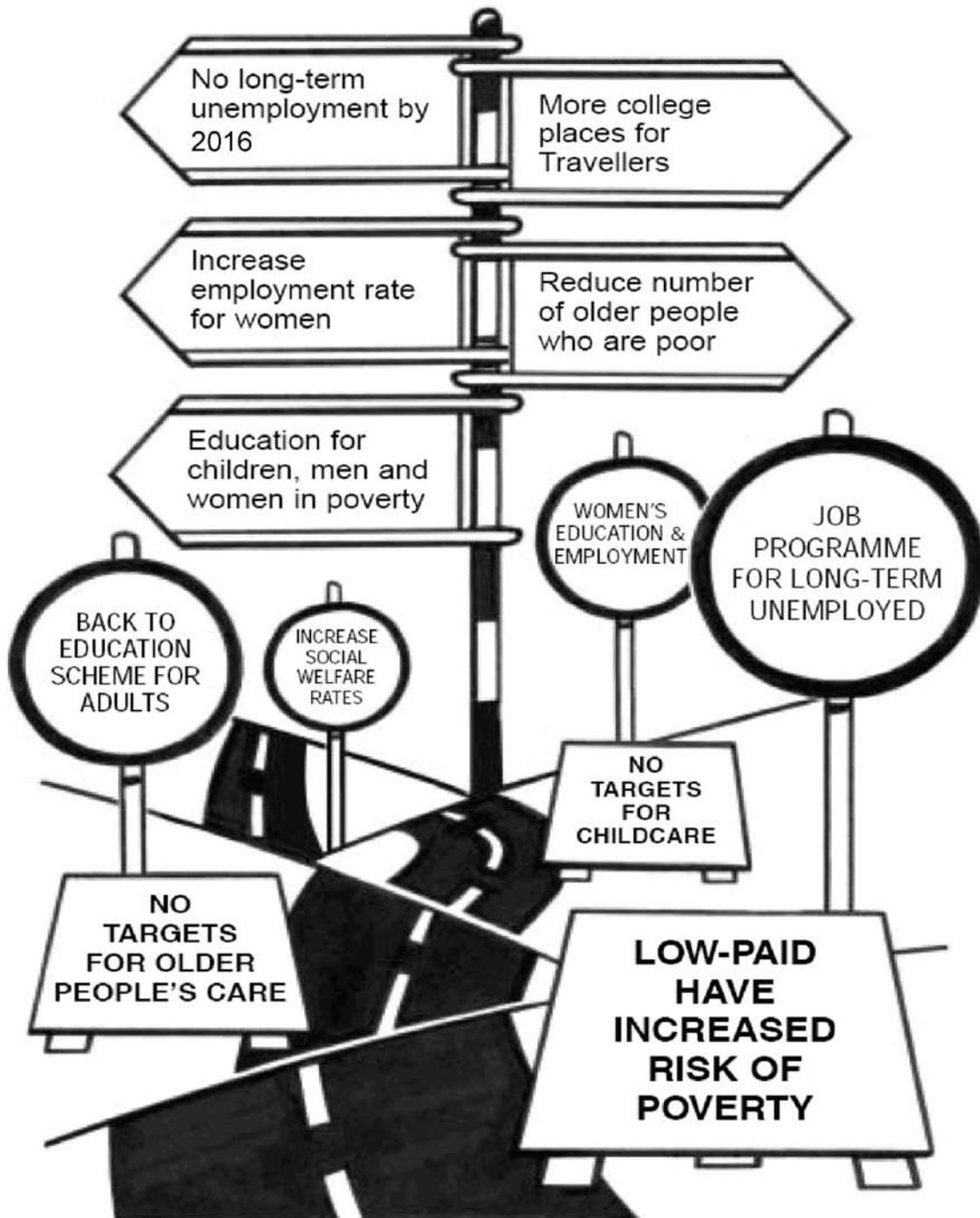
The government have set lots of targets to tackle these issues:

- ✓ Consistent poverty
- ✓ Income adequacy
- ✓ Employment & unemployment
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Housing & Accommodation
- ✓ Quality Childcare
- ✓ Rural Transport
- ✓ Vulnerable Groups – children and young people, women, older people, Travellers, youth homeless, people with disabilities, migrants and members of ethnic minority

Activity Sheet 19

The NAPinclusion road out of poverty

Signposts = NAPinclusion targets
Road signs = NAPinclusion initiative



Activity Sheet 19

Role Cards

1 NOEL

Noel is 43 years old and is married to Anne. He lives in Dublin in a large council estate. He left school at 13. He worked at a lot of different things over the years - his last job was in a printing company. The company closed down five years ago. Noel hasn't been able to get a job since - employers keep telling him they're looking for someone younger or someone with qualifications. He's got to the stage now where he gets depressed about it and doesn't think anyone will give him a job

NOEL'S FACTFILE

Name:	Noel
Age:	43
Marital Status:	Married
No. Dependents:	5
Occupation:	Unemployed (5 yrs)
Education:	Left school at 13 with no qualifications
Income:	Unemployment Assistance (Social Welfare)

2 MARY

Mary is 71 years old. Her husband died three years ago. She lives alone. Her children visit as often as they can, but they're busy with their own jobs and children. Mary worked all her life in the home. Her husband worked as a builder for as long as he could. There was no such thing as taking out private pensions in those days. So when her husband retired they lived off his pension from the government. When Joe died Mary had to claim her own pension. Because she never worked outside the home she was not entitled to as much as Joe. She owns her own home now but living on an old age pension can be hard. She has to cut back on a lot of things

MARY'S FACTFILE

Name:	Mary
Age:	71
Marital Status:	Widowed
No. Dependents:	None
Occupation:	Old-Age Pensioner
Education:	No qualifications
Income:	Old-Age Pension

Activity Sheet 19

Role Cards

3 MARIE

Marie is a mother of five children under 17 years. She has been separated from her husband for the past 8 years. She receives the One Parent Family Allowance from the Social Welfare for herself and the youngest 4 children. She doesn't get any money for her eldest son. He works in a restaurant but doesn't get paid much, she still has to partly support him. The family lives in a large council estate in the midlands. A lot of people in the estate depend on social welfare. Many of the young people leave school without doing the leaving. They end up with low-paying jobs that have very little future. Marie would love to get a job even a part-time one, but the cost of childcare is too much.

MARIE'S FACTFILE

Name:	Marie
Age:	42
Marital Status:	Separated
No. Dependents:	5 (7-17 years)
Occupation:	Full-time at home
Education:	Junior Certificate
Income:	One parent Allowance

4 LAURA

Laura is seventeen. She is a Traveller living in Cork. She left school when she was eleven after years of not feeling she belonged. She has never had a job, but she would love to train as a hairdresser and get a job. She is proud of her Traveller identity and hates all the prejudice and discrimination that she and her family have to put up with because they are different from settled people.

LAURA'S FACTFILE

Name:	Laura
Age:	17
Marital Status:	Single
No. Dependents:	None
Occupation:	Unemployed
Education:	No qualifications
Income:	None (under 18 years)

Activity Sheet 19

NAPinclusion at Work

Decide how the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion will impact upon the character in your role card. Use the sign posts (NAPinclusion targets) and road signs (NAPinclusion initiatives) on Activity Sheet 19 'The NAPinclusion Road Out of Poverty' to complete the form below.

NAPinclusion at Work

FACTFILE

Name:

Age:

Number of dependants:

Education:

Income:

What is stopping this person's life improving?

What do you think would make this person's life better?

What sign posts (NAPinclusion targets) or road signs (NAPinclusion initiatives) would help this situation?

What road works (NAPinclusion gaps) would not help this situation improve?

In your opinion do you think this person's life will get better as a result of the NAPinclusion? Why?

Activity Sheet 20

Student Information Sheet – Responses to Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ireland

Community Development Support Programme (CDSP) gives financial assistance to fund community development projects and resource centres in disadvantaged areas.

City and County Development Boards bring together key agencies and bodies in cities and counties to develop plans for each area of the county to deliver better health, recreation, education and help community development.

RAPID and CLAR provide investment programmes targeted at the most disadvantaged urban centres, regional towns and rural areas.

Family and Community Services Resource Centres Programme aims to combat disadvantage by helping families.

The Local Development Social Inclusion Programme operates through a system of area-based partnership companies to support economic and social development at local level disadvantaged rural and urban areas. Funds are also given to a number of organisations, which operate on a national level rather than a local basis, like Pavee Point.

The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) is the government's programme of action to address poverty and social exclusion. (see activity 19).

The National Development Plan 2007-2013: Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All Ireland sets out a national strategy to encourage and develop Ireland's economic and social development.

Towards 2016 is the government's partnership programme which has as one of its four pillars the community and voluntary sector.

Non-government organisations like the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which is a national organisation with local branches.

Locally based voluntary groups like Meals on Wheels.

Citizen X is any individual who decides to take action on the issue of poverty by, for example, taking part in a campaign to raise public awareness, or volunteering in organisations working with those affected by poverty.

Activity Sheet 20

Responses to Poverty at National and Local Level

Use the internet to research the following:

Name of group/organisation/programme:

.....

Contact number and web address:

.....

Logo of organisation/programme (Draw below, if any)

.....

Main activities

.....

How is the organisation contributing to tackling poverty?

.....

Does the organisation/programme have local branches? Where is the nearest one to your school?

.....

Is the organisation/group/programme linked to any NGOs or Government programmes?

.....

Does the organisation/programme rely on volunteers? If so, for what kind of activities?

.....

Activity Sheet 21

How do you level the playing pitch?

Groups/organisations involved in anti-poverty work may concentrate on one or all of the following areas:

A) Provision of Services: Organisations may be involved in providing services, like childcare, services for older people, services for the disabled etc

B) Policy development/advocacy: Organisations may try to influence government policy, for example, to increase the level of child benefit in order to reduce child poverty.

C) Empowerment: Organisations that stress the importance of supporting those directly affected by poverty to be involved in the solutions, for example, providing education or training opportunities. This community development approach emphasises the importance of people working together for social change that will improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live and/or the society of which they are a part. This approach stresses the importance of enabling those who are disadvantaged to participate in this work for change.

- Complete the table below by researching the following groups/organisations using the internet and local directories and information centres. Some of these organisations will have local branches, so see can you link to your local or nearest branch.
- Insert A, B or C (from the explanations above) in the space provided. Note that some groups or organisations might have more than one focus area.

Activity Sheet 21

How do you level the playing pitch? continued

Insert A, B or C in 'Area of Focus'

Some groups will have more than one area of focus

ORGANISATION / GROUP	AREA OF FOCUS
Age Action www.ageaction.ie	
Akidwa www.akidwa.ie	
Barnardos www.barnardos.ie	
Children's Rights Alliance www.childrensrights.ie	
Combat Poverty Agency www.combatpoverty.ie	
Disability Information Ireland www.disability.ie	
Diversity Ireland www.diversityireland.ie	
Cáirde www.cairde.ie	
Enable Ireland www.enableireland.ie	
Exchange House www.exchangehouse.ie	
Lion's Clubs www.lionsclubs.ie	
Society of St Vincent de Paul www.svp.ie	
GLEN - Gay and Lesbian Equality Network www.glen.ie	
Pavee Point www.paveepoint.ie	

Activity Sheet 21

How do you level the playing pitch? continued

ORGANISATION / GROUP	AREA OF FOCUS
ARASI (Association for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ireland) www.arasi.org	
Community Development Support Programme *Contact your local community development group for details	
Family and Community Resource Centre www.fsa.ie/familyresource/index.html	
The Irish Wheelchair Association www.iwa.ie	
Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children www.ispcc.ie	
Meals on Wheels Contact your local health centre or citizen's advice centre for details on this service.	
Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice www.vpsj.ie	
Irish Traveller Movement www.itmtrav.com	
One Family www.onefamily.ie	
Irish Refugee Council www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie	
Treoir www.treoir.ie	
Focus Ireland www.focusireland.ie	

*Contact your local community development group by looking up your local phone directory or Golden Pages under Community Development or Community Centre to get the web address and other information. The County or City Development Boards bring together local agencies that work on behalf of the community. For example, VECs, FÁS, LEADER groups etc. develop a common approach about services that are delivered locally for example health, education, community development, recreation, and employment.

Check out your Local Development Board to see what projects and programmes they support and organise in your area. (Google your county/city name and community development board, for example, Meath Community Development board to get the web address).

Activity Sheet 22

Choosing Your Community Work Experience

In choosing where you would like to carry out your community work experience answer the following questions:

1. From your research what group or organisation that has an anti-poverty focus would you be interested in working with and why? Give two reasons for your answer.

A.

.....

B.

.....

2. What other group or organisation would you be interested in working with and why? Give two reasons for your answer.

A.

.....

B.

.....

Activity Sheet 22

Sample Letters

Your Home Address
Telephone Number
Date

Title of person to whom the **letter** is to be addressed
Address of the organisation

Dear **Name** (if known)
or
Dear Sir/Madam

I am a student at **NAME of SCHOOL** and I am currently in Transition Year. As part of my studies I have been exploring and researching poverty issues in Ireland, and organisations that work locally to support people who are often marginalised in society.

I am interested in working with your organisation as (**Reasons for wanting to do Community Work Experience – use previous activity for ideas here**)
And I hope to learn (**give some examples of what you hope to learn from work experience with the organisation**)

My Community Work Experience position is for one week from Monday XX to Friday XX.

If you are prepared to consider me please contact me on the above telephone number. I am available for interview at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours faithfully,

Sign your name.
Print your name

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary

Instructions

For your work experience you will be working in your local community with an organisation.

This work report is to help you get the best out of your community work experience.

You should observe and think about your work and your workplace so that you can answer the questions and comment on your experience.

This diary will form part of the assessment of this TY unit. You must complete the diary and the reflection and return it to your class teacher.

Your Employment Details

Name of organisation

Address

Phone

Contact person

Work hours

Clothing requirements

Lunch arrangements

What time do you leave for work?

What breaks are you allowed during the day?

What facilities are provided for staff (toilets, cloakroom, staff lockers, lunch room, etc.)?

What is the procedure in case of an emergency (e.g. a fire)?

Does your school insurance policy cover your community work experience?

Yes:

No:

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

Daily Diary

Describe briefly the work you were involved in each day, work you observed others doing, how you worked with other staff members and any other reflections or comments.

DAY 1

DAY 2

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

Daily Diary

DAY 3

DAY 4

DAY 5

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

Work Focus

Describe how the community group/organisation that you are working with has an anti-poverty /social inclusion focus. (e.g. how does the group/organisation work to empower and/or assist the people they work with?)

Describe how the group you are working with are or are not able to participate fully in society? (See bottom of the page for questions which may help answer this question)¹

What are the greatest challenges you see for the community group /organisation with whom you have worked? (e.g. facilities, finance, personnel, other resources)

It is often important to remember that confidentiality is an element of work with community organisations. Give an example of how you would maintain confidentiality in a community work environment.

1. Can they participate in all aspects of life e.g. social life - in education/ training; cultural life - in leisure activities; political life - participate in a group that can influence change or stand for election; economic life - get a well paid job or have enough income to have a reasonable standard of living

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

In work situations everyone is entitled to the same opportunities, rights and access, regardless of their age, sex and sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or background.

In the organisation what is the breakdown of women and men among staff and volunteers?

Females:

Males:

.....

Are there certain jobs carried out mainly by women and/or men?
Why do you think this is?

.....

Are there facilities available for people with disabilities?

Yes:

No:

.....

Can all those who wish to participate in the organisation do so? (e.g. does lack of money/ transport/ childcare/facilities etc. prevent anyone from doing so?)

.....

What rights are this organisation working for?

.....

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

What are the top three priorities of the organisation?

Interview

Ask some members of staff about their job. Prepare and write down your questions beforehand. Remember to arrange a time and place for the interview. Be polite. Do not ask personal questions and always thank people at the end of the interview. You can take rough notes as the person answers the questions. You can then add to these notes when the interview is over. Alternatively, you could tape the interview with the person's permission.

Possible questions:

What is your job title?

What sort of things do you do in your job?

What skills do you need to do this job?

What training have you done?

What do you like about your job?

What do you like least about your job?

Do you think this work is important for your community? If so, why and how?

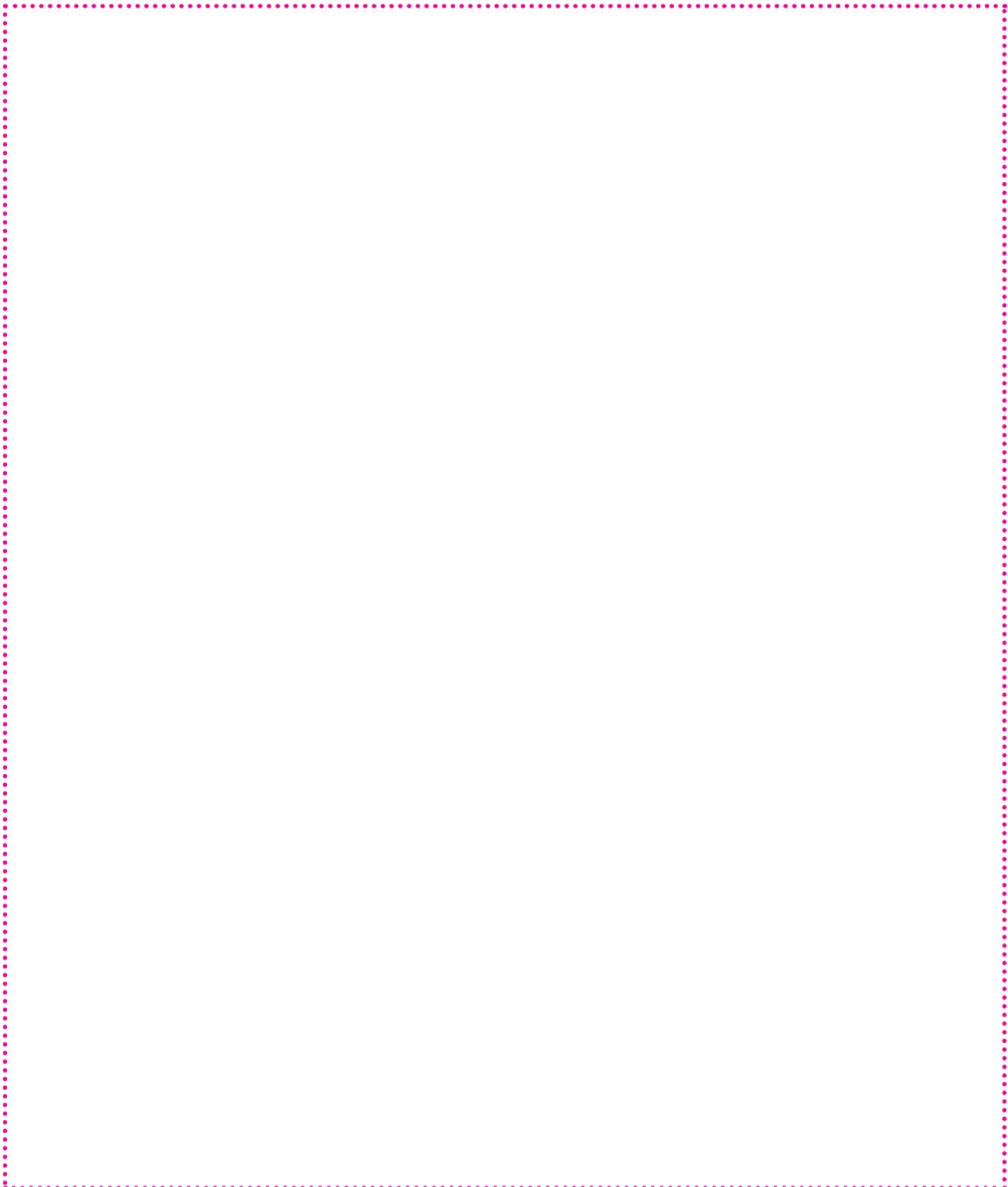
What are the main challenges you face in your work?

If you could change one thing about the area/issue you work in/with what would it be?

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

In the space below give an account of an interview that you have conducted with a key person in the community group/ organisation and say what you have learned from him/her.



Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

Conclusions

Describe how, if at all, the work that you have done with this community group/organisation has affected or changed your attitude to community involvement.

.....
Name the skills you have gained from school and other places that have been useful in this workplace. (e.g. communication skills; organisation skills; taking initiative; being flexible; being part of a team etc)

.....
After spending a week in the job, are you still interested in doing this type of work or work you saw others involved in? Why, or why not?

.....
Was the work experience the same as you thought it would be or different?
How did it differ?

.....
What do you think the staff and the people who use the organisation /service learned from you?
.....

Activity Sheet 23

Community Work Experience Diary continued

Did you encounter any challenges or problems during your placement? If so, how did you overcome them?

.....
What do you think you have achieved from your placement?

.....
Describe how what you have learned (skills, knowledge, attitudes) can be applied in the future – in school and in the community.

.....

Activity Sheet 24

Action on Poverty

The Young Social Innovators (YSI) Award was created in 2001 to develop social awareness and activism among transition-year students so that they might be encouraged to become effective champions for social justice throughout their lives.

The overall YSI Award in 2006 went to St Vincent's CBS in Glasnevin, Dublin, for their project Can Roses Grow in Concrete? And the special Combating Poverty in Ireland award, sponsored by the Combat Poverty Agency, went to Our Lady's College, Greenhills, Drogheda.

Can Roses Grow in Concrete?

Their project investigated the link between where a person grows up and their chances of succeeding in life. The students gathered data about educational levels, employment status and prison participation rates of their local area in Finglas and Cabra and compared them against the Dublin City average.

They concluded that these factors are strongly linked to the area a young person grows up in and not everyone in society has equal opportunities.

However, they believe that, just like in the song Can Roses grow in Concrete? if people are given the right resources to succeed in life, they can.

JOHN LYONS is a teacher at St Vincent's CBS, Glasnevin, Dublin.

Activity Sheet 24

Action on Poverty continued

'Homelessness in Drogheda – How Our Minds Exclude the Less Enrolled Members of Social Society'.

Our class, under the guidance of our teacher, Ms McHale, set out to achieve a better understanding of homelessness in general and to look at the incidence of the problem in Drogheda. We called our project 'Homelessness in Drogheda – How Our Minds Exclude the Less Enrolled Members of Social Society'.

We examined research reports from Focus Ireland, Combat Poverty and the Simon Community and we organised a guest speaker from the women's refuge and children's centre. We also liaised with Drogheda Homeless Aid, the local authority and local businesses. We produced leaflets giving the reasons why people become homeless, definitions of homelessness and the names of organisations that could help. We also organised fundraising events for the women's refuge. A unique aspect of our project was that we targeted teenagers. All the money we raised came from teenagers and the gig was solely organised and attended by teenagers.

OYINKANSALA SOLANKE one of the team from Our Lady's College Greenhills, Drogheda

Activity Sheet 24

Your Action on Poverty Today

Read the following suggested anti-poverty awareness raising actions and add your own ideas.

A survey of access for people with disabilities to local amenities including schools, colleges, recreational facilities etc.

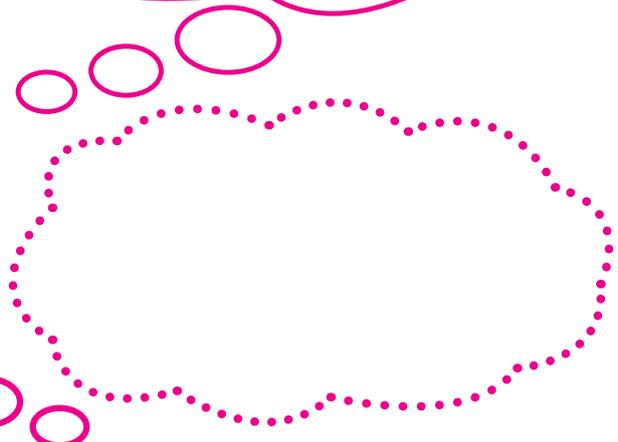
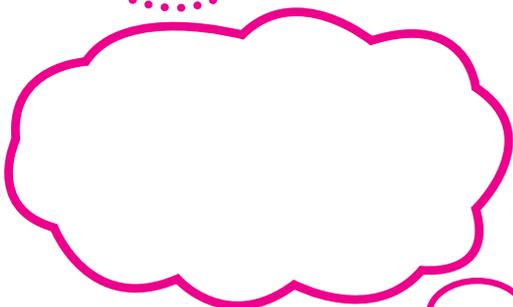
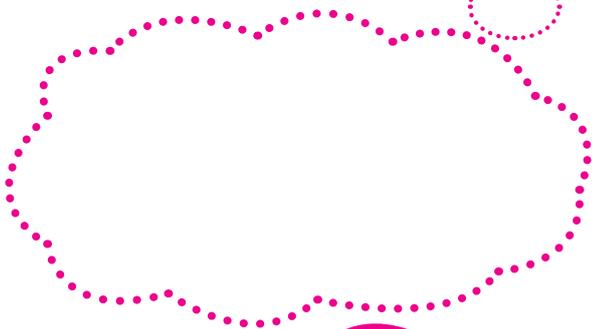
School magazine or exhibition on a poverty-related issue

Run a school poetry/prose/poster/slogan competition with an anti-poverty focus

A designated day in your school – for example 'Open your eyes to child poverty in Ireland'

Talk at school assemblies on issues like homelessness; rural poverty etc.

Your group Ideas:



Activity Sheet 24

Evaluating the Action

What worked well?

.....

What caused difficulties?

.....

What would you do differently?

.....

What did you learn?

.....

TRANSITION UNIT DESCRIPTOR

1. Title of transition unit

'Ireland – A Level Playing Pitch?

2. Area of study

Local and Global Citizenship

3. Overview

This unit encourages students to gain community work experience with organisations working with groups experiencing poverty in Ireland. Poverty is not just about having no money. It can mean being left out of activities that other people take for granted, poor mental and physical health and a feeling of powerlessness. It has many different causes and affects a wide range of groups including: children in poor households; lone parents; older women; homeless people; Travellers; people with a disability; asylum seekers; and so on.

An important part of the approach of this transition unit is to link community work experience with an exploration of poverty, and so contribute to a students' ability to develop an analysis of poverty in Ireland today, in a real life way. The benefits of this approach are summed up by students themselves:

I think that what we've learned from this will always affect us. I think our outlook has changed. We learned how to be more respectful to each other and to be more sensitive to other people. We learned about racism, how we should not discriminate against other people and how we can make a difference in our community. (Opening Doors; Combat Poverty/ CDU,2005)

4. Links

This unit has clear links with CSPE in the Junior Certificate Cycle, Religious Education, Social and Scientific at Leaving Certificate level, Social Education in the Leaving Certificate Applied as well as links to the proposed new Leaving Certificate Politics and Society course.

5. Summary outline

- Students play labelling game and discuss the often harmful nature of stereotyping.
- Students use case studies to carry out an investigation into the types of poverty and social exclusion and its effects on individuals.
- Students identify and analyse the causes of poverty, differentiate between causes and consequences and in particular the structural causes of poverty.
- Students investigate the link between poverty and human rights.
- Students analyse different types of communities by using photographs as a starting point and hypothesise on their needs.
- Students research social exclusion and poverty and its effect on people's participation in society.
- Students use the Internet and other media to research local and national responses to poverty.
- Students identify local organisations and community groups that have an anti- poverty focus and invite in a guest speaker.
- Students prepare for community work placement.
- Students record diary of community work placement and reflect on and analyse the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed and enhanced through their work placement.
- Students make presentation to class on an aspect of poverty in Ireland
- Students organise a poverty awareness raising event.

6. Breakdown of the unit	
20 hours of class contact time. Approximately 25 hours of practical work, in the form of one week's community work placement.	
7. Aims	
<i>This transition unit aims to:</i>	
1. To develop learner's understanding and knowledge of the causes of poverty, as well as the nature and extent of poverty in Ireland.	
2. To develop learner's critical thinking skills through analysing the causes of poverty in Ireland within a human rights framework.	
3. To empower learners to engage in anti-poverty action and see its importance in engendering a just and equal society.	
4. To encourage learners to interact with organisations /community groups that have an anti-poverty focus.	
5. To foster in learners attitudes of respect, understanding and empathy towards people who may be marginalized in our society.	
8. Learning outcomes	
<i>On completion of this unit students should be able to:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how stereotyping results from often negative generalisations, especially in relation to marginalised groups in society; • describe types of poverty: relative, absolute and consistent, and identify groups in society that are at most risk of experiencing poverty and social exclusion; • explain why a structural analysis is necessary to explain the causes of poverty in society; • participate in group discussion on the impact of poverty and social exclusion on people's lives; • demonstrate respect and empathy for groups and individuals who are at risk or who are experiencing poverty and social exclusion; • identify local groups/organisations that have an anti-poverty focus and those which use a rights based approach; • explain the difference between organisations that 'help' people and those that 'empower' them; • investigate local and national responses to poverty; • plan and present an overview of community work placement in class, based on the community work experience diary; • design and carry out an action that will raise awareness of poverty issues at local and/or national level. 	
9. Key skills	How evidenced
Information processing	Learners will access information from a range of sources and communication technologies in relation to poverty issues. They will develop the ability to record, organize, and summarise information in relation to poverty and social exclusion.
Critical and creative thinking	Learners will analyse poverty issues, challenge assumptions, examine evidence and reach conclusions in relation to poverty issues. Learners should be encouraged to think imaginatively and actively seek solutions in relation to social exclusion.
Communicating	Learners will engage in listening and dialogue around poverty issues; expressing opinions, discussing, speculating, challenging, reasoning, and engaging in debate and argument.

Working with others	Learners will become more adept at developing good relationships with others through their community placement, as well as skills of acknowledging individual differences and negotiating and resolving conflicts about issues relating to perceptions of poverty within the classroom.
Being personally effective	Learners will become more confident, evaluate their performance and achieve personal and collective goals by their involvement in class activities and community work experience. Learners will develop personal qualities such as being flexible and taking initiative through their involvement in class activities and community work experience.

10. Methodologies

Ranking/scoring exercises; brainstorming; walking debates; pair and group work; case studies; photographs/images; games; newspaper articles; drama; Internet research; visiting speakers; carrying out interviews; diary; creative writing; posters/art work; presentations.

11. Assessment approaches

1. Community work placement **diary** (see appendix).

2. **Presentation** on a specific aspect of poverty in Ireland or on the work of a group/organisation concerned with bringing about change in the area.

1. **Diary** (see attached) - Community work placement diary marking breakdown

- Employment details 10%
- Daily diary 20%
- Work focus 20%
- Interview 25%
- Conclusions 25%

2. **Presentation** on a specific aspect of poverty in Ireland or on the work of a group/organisation concerned with bringing about change in the area. Teachers and peers will provide focused feedback to the learner on their presentation under the following headings:

Content: 40%

- Does the content relate to the title and/or purpose of the presentation?
- Is the breadth and depth of the content sufficient? e.g. does the understanding of poverty outlined go beyond individual explanations based on bad luck, individual failings, family circumstances, to include broader societal causes e.g. how resources are distributed, who has access to them, how they access them.
- Are the learner's ideas, attitudes and beliefs consistent with a human rights perspective?
- Are their recommendations for future action/s by a range of actors including government in relation to poverty issues evident?

Overall Structure: 40%

- Is the presentation coherent, easy to follow and suited to its audience?
- Is there an identifiable beginning (summary), middle and end (conclusion)?
- Is the material presented in an imaginative way using a variety of media?
- Is the response to questions and comment competent?

General Management: 20%

- Is there good time management?
- Does the learner demonstrate good presentation skills?

12. Evaluation

Learners and teachers will evaluate the success of this unit by completing a questionnaire or engaging in a class discussion. The latter approach can include small groups discussing questions initially and then feeding back key points to the larger group. The evaluation should occur at different stages in the study of the unit.

- a) What was most enjoyable part of this stage of the transition unit?
- b) What was the least enjoyable?
- c) What skills were developed as a result of doing this stage of the transition unit?
- d) How were they demonstrated?
- e) What skills need to be improved and how can this be done?
- f) Did the class work well together as a team and share responsibility for their learning?

At the end of the unit, the following questions should be asked:

- g) What was the greatest success of the unit for you?
- h) What was the greatest challenge for you in the study of the unit?
- i) What would you change or do differently if you were going to the transition unit again?

13. Resources

1. The main bank of lessons pertaining to this unit are available to download as a PDF file from the Combat Poverty Website - www.combatpoverty.ie
2. Student Community Work Placement Diary- see appendix

Other material and websites related to this area:

Websites:

Age Action Ireland: www.ageaction.ie. Age Action Ireland is a national independent organisation on ageing and older people which promotes better policies and services for older people.

Barnardos: www.barnardos.ie. Barnardo's supports children whose well-being is under threat by working with them, their families and communities and by campaigning for the rights of children.

Children's Rights Alliance: www.childrensrights.ie. The Children's Rights Alliance is a national umbrella body composed of a wide range of non-governmental organisations and individuals concerned with the rights and welfare of children. The aim of the Alliance is to promote the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Ireland.

Combat Poverty Agency: www.combatpoverty.ie. Combat Poverty is a state agency that advises the government on ways to tackle poverty in Ireland. Website contains information about poverty in Ireland, with reports, surveys and statistics.

DisABILITY Information Ireland: www.disability.ie. DisAbility Information Ireland provide access to a comprehensive on-line information service for people with disabilities.

Diversity Ireland: www.diversityireland.ie. This is the site of The National Action plan Against Racism.

Enable Ireland: www.enableireland.ie. Enable Ireland enables people with physical disabilities to achieve maximum independence in their local communities.

Exchange House: www.exchangehouse.ie. Exchange House gives information on services for Travellers and also has pages on discrimination against Travellers and on discrimination and intolerance in general.

Focus Ireland: www.focusireland.ie. Focus Ireland works with people who are homeless.

GLEN - Gay and Lesbian Equality Network: www.glen.ie. GLEN campaigns for changes in legislation and social policy in Ireland - in order to advance equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people.

Immigrant Council of Ireland: www.immigrantcouncil.ie. This is an independent organisation working with and for immigrants in promoting their rights through information, advocacy and awareness.

Inclusion Ireland: www.inclusionireland.ie. The National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability is a national voluntary organisation working to promote the rights of people with an intellectual disability in Ireland to ensure their full and equal participation in society.

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC): www.ispcc.ie. ISPCC promotes the rights and citizenship of children in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Irish Refugee Council: www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie The Irish Refugee Council promotes public awareness and understanding of asylum and refugee issues.

Irish Traveller Movement: www.itmtrav.com. The Irish Traveller Movement website provides details on issues such as accommodation, equality and education for Travellers.

National Council for Aging and Older People (NCAOP): www.ncaop.ie. The NCAOP is an advisory agency to the Minister for Health and Children and others on all aspects of ageing and the welfare of older people in the Republic of Ireland.

National Disability Authority (NDA): www.nda.ie. The NDA is the lead state agency on disability issues, providing independent expert advice to Government on policy and practice

National Women's Council of Ireland: www.nwci.ie. The National Women's Council of Ireland is the representative organisation of women in Ireland. It works to promote equality, human rights and empowerment of women.

Office for Social Inclusion (OSI): www.socialinclusion.ie. The OSI is the Irish Government Office with overall responsibility for developing, co-ordinating and driving Ireland's National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2016.

Office of the Minister for Children (OMC): www.omc.gov.ie. The OMC is committed to improving the lives of all children in Ireland under the National Children's Strategy and to bringing greater coherence to policy making for children.

One Family: www.onefamily.ie. One Family provides voice, support and action for one-parent families through membership, professional services and campaigning.

One Parent Exchange Network: www.oneparent.ie. OPEN, the national network of local lone parent self-help groups, represents the diversity of interests of lone parents (particularly those living in / or at risk of living in poverty) and promotes their inclusion and progression within wider society.

Treoir www.treoir.ie - promoting the welfare of and improve the standards of care for unmarried parents and their children.

Pavee Point: <http://www.paveepoint.ie/> Pavee Point is a partnership of Irish Travellers and settled people working together to improve the lives of Irish Travellers through working towards social justice, solidarity, socio-economic development and human rights.

People with Disabilities in Ireland (PwDI): www.pwdi.ie - an umbrella organisation, which brings people together locally and nationally to work on common, issues that affect all people with disabilities.

Peter McVerry Trust: www.pmvtrust.ie. The Peter McVerry Trust is committed to reducing the effects of homelessness, drug misuse and social disadvantage among young people in the Dublin area.

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul: www.svp.ie. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is Ireland's largest volunteer organisation, which supports and champions the rights of the poorest members of our society.

Simon Community: www.simoncommunity.com. The Simon Community of Ireland seeks to end homelessness in Ireland.

The Equality Authority: www.equality.ie/. The Equality Authority seeks to achieve positive change in the situation and experience of groups and individuals experiencing inequality.

The Irish Wheelchair Association <http://www.iwa.ie/> The Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) is the national organisation of people with limited mobility.

Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice: www.vpsj.ie. The Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice works for social and economic change, tackling poverty and exclusion.

Government Departments:

Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs - www.pobail.ie.

Department of Education and Science - www.education.ie.

Department of Health and Children - www.dohc.ie.

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform - www.justice.ie.

Department of Social and Family Affairs - www.welfare.ie.

Written Texts:

Counted Out - A Resource for Teachers, Gowran, S., Combat Poverty Agency and Curriculum Development Unit, CDVEC in association with Foldens, Dublin 202

Developing Facilitation Skills – A Handbook for Group Facilitators. Prendiville, P., Combat Poverty Agency, Dublin 2004.

Left Outside? An educational resource on poverty in Ireland. Bassett, M., Haran, N., Combat Poverty Agency Dublin 2006.

Opening Doors – School and Community Partnership in Poverty Awareness and Social Education Initiatives (Guidelines for Partnership Development), Gowran, S., Curriculum Development Unit, CDVEC and Combat Poverty Agency, Dublin, 2005.

Student Information Leaflets, Combat Poverty Agency in association with Blackrock College, Mount Temple, St Leo's College, Tallaght Community School, 2004.

Contact details
Name of Organisation
Combat Poverty Agency, Bridgewater Centre, Islandbridge, Dublin 8.
Telephone
01 670 6746
Email
<u>info@combatpoverty.ie</u>
Contact person
Bevin Cody: 01 6026611; bevin.cody@combatpoverty.ie Maureen Bassett: 01 465030; bassettm@indigo.ie

Appendix – Community Work Placement Diary

COMMUNITY WORK PLACEMENT DIARY

Instructions

- For your work placement you will be working in your local community with an organisation.
- This work report is to help you get the best out of your community work.
- You should observe and think about your work and your workplace so that you can answer the questions and comment on your experience.

This diary will form part of the assessment of this TY unit. You must complete the diary and the reflection and return it to your class teacher.

Your Employment Details

Name of organisation _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Contact person _____

Work hours _____

Clothing requirements _____

Lunch arrangements _____

What time do you leave for work? _____

What breaks are you allowed during the day?

What facilities are provided for staff (toilets, cloakroom, staff lockers, lunch room, etc.)?

What is the procedure in case of an emergency (e.g. a fire)?

Does your school insurance policy cover your community work placement?

Yes: No:

Daily Diary

Describe briefly the work you were involved in each day, work you observed others doing, how you worked with other staff members and any other reflections or comments.

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Work Focus

Describe how the community group/organisation that you are working with has an anti-poverty /social inclusion focus? *(e.g. how does the group/organisation work to empower and/or assist the people they work with?)*

Describe how the group you are working with are **or** are not able to participate fully in society? (See bottom of the page for questions which may help answer this question) ¹

What are the greatest challenges you see for the community group /organisation with whom you have worked? (e.g. facilities; finance; personnel; other resources)

It is often important to remember that confidentiality is an element of work with community organisations. Give an example of how you would maintain confidentiality in a community work environment.

In work situations everyone is entitled to the same opportunities, rights and access, regardless of their age, sex and sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or background.

In the organisation what is the breakdown of women and men amongst staff and volunteers? Females: Males:

¹ Can they participate in all aspects of life e.g. - social life -in education/ training: cultural life -in leisure activities: political life-participate in a group that can influence change or stand for election: economic life-get a well paid job or have enough income to have a reasonable standard of living

Are there certain jobs carried out mainly by women and/or men? Why do you think this is?

Are there facilities available for people with disabilities? Yes

No:

Can all those who wish to participate in the organisation do so? (*e.g. does lack of money/transport/childcare/physical accessibility prevent anyone from doing so?*)

What rights is this organisation working for?

What are the top three priorities of the organisation? (*It is useful here not just to think of what they do but what they are trying to achieve*)

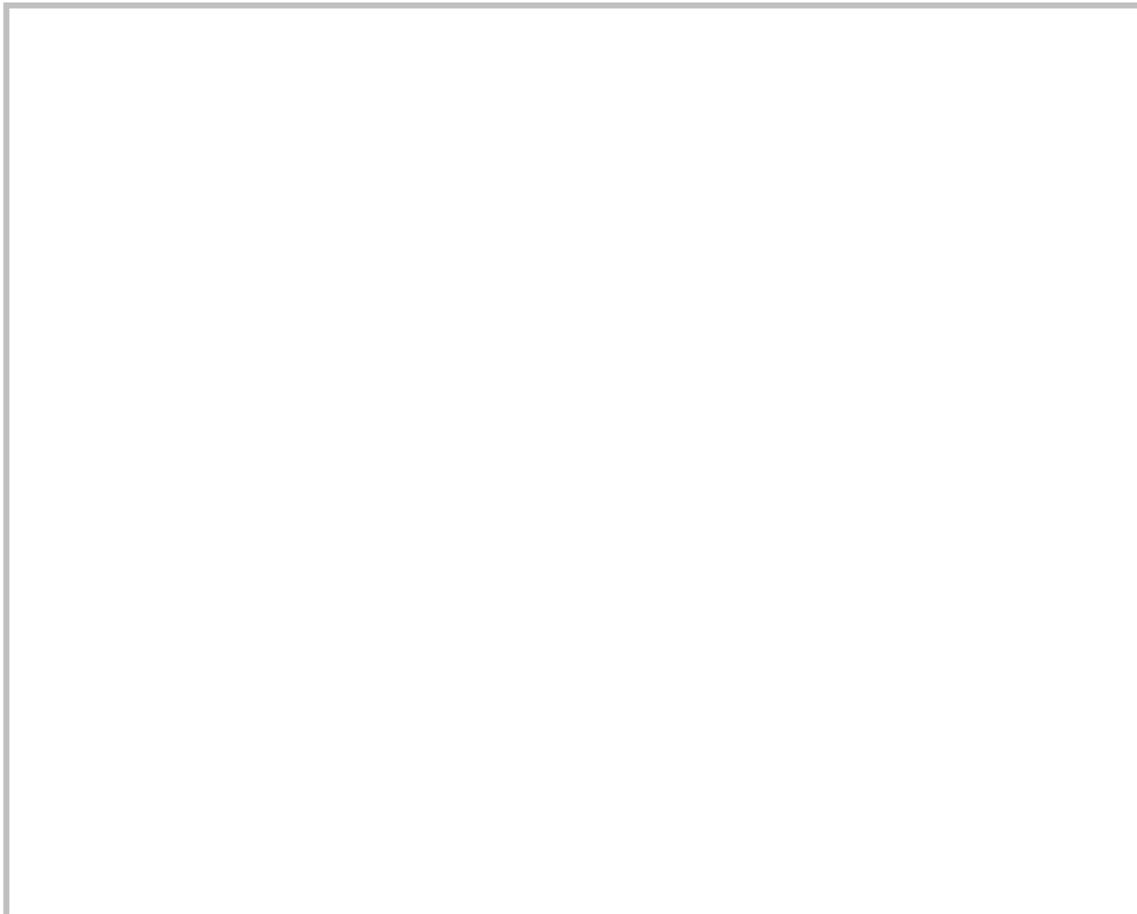
Interview

Ask some members of staff about their job. Prepare and write down your questions beforehand. Remember to arrange a time and place for the interview. Be polite, do not ask personal questions and always thank people at the end of the interview. You can take rough notes as the person answers the questions, you can then add to these notes when the interview is over. Alternatively, you could tape the interview with the person's permission.

Possible questions:

- What is your job title?
- What sort of things do you do in your job?
- What skills do you need to do this job?
- What training have you done?
- What do you like about your job?
- What do you like least about your job?
- Do you think this work is important for your community/ if so why and how?
- What are the main challenges you face in your work?
- If you could change one thing about the area/issue you work in/with what would it be?

In the space below give an account of an interview that you have conducted with a key person in the community group/ organisation and say what you have learned from him/her.



Conclusions

Describe how (if at all) the work that you have done with this community group/organization has affected or changed your attitude to community involvement.

Name the skills you have gained from school and other places that have been useful in this workplace.(e.g. *communications skills; organisation skills; taking initiative; being flexible; being part of a team etc*)

After spending a week in the job, are you still interested in doing this type of work or work you saw others involved in? Why, or why not?

Was the work experience the same as you thought it would be, or different?
How did it differ?

What do you think the staff and the people who use the organisation/service learned from you?

Did you encounter any challenges or problems during your placement? If so, how did you overcome them?

What do you think you have achieved from your placement?

Describe how what you have learned (skills, knowledge, attitudes) can be applied in the future - in school and in the community.
