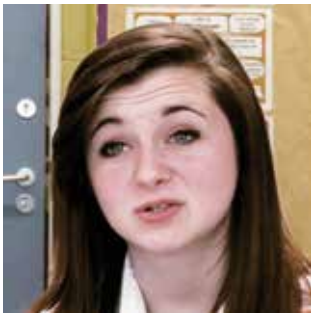
Reach

Teaching Resource

A toolkit for teachers and youth workers to challenge homophobic, sexist and cyber bullying



About EACH

EACH is the award-winning charity for young people and adults affected by homophobia or transphobia. It is also a not-for-profit training agency for employers and organisations committed to realising an equal and safe working environment for all regardless of age, sex, ability, ethnicity, faith, gender identity or sexuality.

Registered Charity number: 1095665
eachaction.org.uk

About Reach

Reach is the dynamic project of EACH working with young people aged 13-21 to create resources for both schools and youth settings to challenge homophobic, sexist and cyberbullying. Between 2010 and 2014 EACH worked with over 3,500 young people across the West of England to co-create the Reach Teaching Resource. Until now their voices have rarely been heard however our work demonstrates that many young people are engaged and empathise with the issues.

The Reach Teaching Resource includes:

- An education pack for teachers and youth workers containing practical strategies, activity ideas and guidance to challenge homophobic, sexist and cyberbullying
- A DVD containing 13 short films on:
  - Homophobic and sexist bullying
  - Homophobic and sexist language
  - Homophobic and sexist cyberbullying
  - Stereotypes and expectations
- A visibility pack featuring posters, wristbands and further resources to raise awareness of homophobic, sexist and cyberbullying

Acknowledgements

The Reach Teaching Resource would not have been possible without the outstanding contributions of the Reach Steering Group which comprised young people aged 13-21 from Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. In addition EACH would like to extend a special thanks to the Reach Project Assistants Tom Perry, Natalie Bennett and Ele Lloyd whose enthusiasm, dedication and insight have been invaluable to the development of the Reach project.

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1. About This Resource

The Reach Teaching Resource has been designed to support teachers and those working with young people to open up a dialogue around homophobia, sexism and cyberbullying. The resource aims to enable teachers to explore and reflect upon pupils' experiences, values and existing knowledge to effectively challenge prejudice-based bullying. It is equally relevant and adaptable to professionals working with young people in informal settings.

The Education Pack

The resource contains a range of activities for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. These activities have been grouped as introductory, intermediate and advanced programmes to allow introduction, consolidation, and, where appropriate, re-visitation of the issues of homophobic, sexist and cyberbullying. All programmes have clear learning objectives which aim to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of prejudice-based bullying.

Activities are inclusive of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles and provide space for pupil led discussion. In addition, ideas for whole class projects have been included allowing pupils to explore and share their learning within a wider school or community context. Guidance notes are also provided to allow teachers to estimate timings, classroom dynamics and required resources.

The resource contains supplementary guidance plus activities on sexting. Existing resources around sexting can overlook the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people as well as reinforce gender stereotypes. The film and accompanying activities designed by members of the Reach Steering Group sought to redress this imbalance.

For further information and support about sexting please refer to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre **ceop.police.uk**

EACH recognises that the prejudice and discrimination experienced by transgender pupils can vary greatly from that of lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils. Whilst this resource remains inclusive of transgender stories EACH acknowledges that transphobic bullying is different from homophobic bullying and warrants its own focus. Discussions in this resource around gender stereotyping create the groundwork from which wider discussions around transphobia should be had as a dedicated piece of work.

All activities can be adapted to meet the individual needs of the setting and its pupils. In planning for delivery of these activities, EACH recommends that teachers consider the context in which it will be delivered and review the appropriate policies. In particular, EACH advocates an holistic approach which recognises the interaction between classroom activities, policies, practices and senior leadership.

See page 51 for further information about EACH and how we can support your setting to utilise this resource.

Film User Guide

The Reach DVD contains 13 short films created by young people for young people and their teachers. The films provide an engaging platform from which to explore the topic of prejudice-based bullying with pupils. To ensure you utilise the most appropriate films for your pupils EACH advises that you watch them in their entirety preceding any work that you do with the resource.

The films can be viewed in any order and have been structured around the following key themes:

Theme 1:
Homophobic and Sexist Bullying

Film 1: What is Homophobic Bullying?

University students describe homophobic bullying and how it is experienced at school.

Film 2: Why do we see Homophobic Bullying in School?

University students explain why homophobic bullying occurs and what we can all do to stop it.

Film 3: Dear Year 7 Me

Young people reflect on their experiences of prejudice-based bullying in school.

Theme 2:
Homophobic and Sexist Language

Film 1:
Labelled

Year 10 pupils challenge prejudice-based language and labels.

Film 2:
So Gay

Sixth Form pupils examine the prevalence of casual homophobic language.

Film 3: Haunted

Young people explore the impact of homophobic and sexist language.

Film User Guide

Theme 3:
Homophobic and Sexist Cyberbullying

Film 1: Tagged

Year 9 pupils explore homophobic cyberbullying and what it can look like.

Film 2: Tweets

Sixth Form pupils reflect on the use of homophobic language online.

Film 3: Where's the Harm?

Young people explore a pupil's experience of sexting.

Film 4: What is the Impact of Social Media on Homophobic Bullying?

University students reflect upon the role and impact of social media on homophobic bullying.

Theme 4:
Stereotypes and expectations

Film 1: Coming Out

Sixth Form pupils challenge stereotypes around 'coming out'.

Film 2: Makeover

Young people reflect on gender stereotypes and sexist bullying.

Film 3: How are Gay People Portrayed in the Media?

University students examine the role of the media in reinforcing stereotypes around gay and transgender people.

In addition to these short films the DVD contains three 'making-of' films and interviews. These provide an invaluable insight into the experiences and motivations of the young people involved in Reach. The films can be used as the basis for further activities with pupils and to inspire class projects.

2. Before You Begin

Creating a Safe Space

It is important that homophobic bullying and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues are discussed sensitively and respectfully. Before embarking on a piece of work with your pupils regarding bullying and gay or transgender issues we trust you will find the following useful.

Ground Rules

When discussing homophobia or transphobia with pupils it is important that you are prepared for dealing with the (sometimes difficult) situations which may arise from discussing such sensitive topics. It is advisable to draw up a set of ground rules with your pupils before starting a piece of work on this issue. The following is an example set of ground rules.

- Be open and honest: there is no such thing as a 'stupid' question. If you do not feel confident asking a question during the activity then you can discuss it with your teacher privately
- Respect each other: the opinions and views that you hear may differ from your own. It is important to take on board new information and keep an open mind as you contribute to the activities. It is possible to disagree without disrespecting one another. Adopt a respectful attitude towards your peers: listen and learn
- Be inclusive: express your ideas and opinions but ensure everyone is encouraged and feels comfortable to speak. Do not dominate the discussions nor interrupt each other
- Appreciate confidentiality: consider carefully what information you are willing to share about yourself and be considerate of others' privacy. Do not reveal personal information about someone without their permission and avoid using real names

How to Discuss Prejudice-Based Bullying

Staff can sometimes be nervous when discussing gay or transgender issues. It is important to remember that no-one deserves to be bullied. Gay and transgender people are entitled to equal rights in the UK and should be protected from harassment or bullying. Homophobic, transphobic or sexist bullying is unacceptable in any context.

Before you begin using this resource consider the following:

- Be familiar with your school's anti-bullying policy and stance on prejudice-based bullying
- If there are gay or transgender pupils in your class be careful not to treat them differently or expect them to offer insights or observations
- Expect some views to be uncomfortable. Pupils will not learn overnight that prejudice-based bullying is unacceptable nor will they be expected to change their mind immediately. The point is to indicate this is unacceptable and will not be tolerated within the school
- Challenge the discriminatory attitudes and behaviour rather than the person. Make it clear that you will not tolerate sexist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, racist or religious jokes or insults
- Provide accurate information and model inclusive language when challenging prejudice-based bullying. Be open to the limitations that your own attitudes, stereotypes and expectations can place on your personal perspective. If you feel unconfident addressing gay or transgender issues in your classroom speak to your Senior Leadership Team about training opportunities
- Actively listen to and learn from the experiences of others. Do not underestimate or deny other people's feelings or concerns

3. What the Law says

Schools in England have a legal duty to prevent and challenge all forms of bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying. Schools cannot discriminate on the grounds of perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity against a pupil or staff member.

Government legislation asserts that schools need to be proactive in preventing and responding to homophobic and transphobic bullying and ensure all children and young people feel included.

Education and Inspection Act 2006

Schools have a number of statutory obligations in relation to behaviour which establish clear responsibilities to prevent and respond to bullying. Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states:

- Every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents
- Headteachers have the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under lawful control of school staff

The Education Act 2011 provides teachers with a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images on electronic devices including mobile phones.

The Equality Act 2010

The Single Equality Act and the **Public Duty** mean that schools and other public bodies have a duty to protect people from discrimination and harassment on the grounds of disability, gender identity, race, faith, sex, sexual orientation or pregnancy.

Under the general duty, in Section 149 of the Equality Act, all public bodies need to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Ofsted

Ofsted's Inspection Framework 2012 expects schools to:

- Teach pupils that homophobic and transphobic bullying, harassment and discrimination is wrong
- Create a positive ethos in school which recognises and celebrates diversity
- Manage pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons including homophobic or transphobic language
- Respond to homophobic and transphobic bullying consistently and systematically

4. National Curriculum Links

Schools must offer a curriculum which is balanced, broadly based and which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

This resource provides practical strategies, activity ideas and guidance for schools to address homophobic, sexist and cyberbullying within their curriculum. It is particularly relevant to Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education however activities can be incorporated into wider subjects as part of a whole-school approach.

Citizenship

Citizenship education should provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. Teaching should equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare them to take their place in society as responsible citizens.

Key Stage 3 pupils should be taught about:

- The precious liberties enjoyed by the citizens of the United Kingdom
- The roles played by public institutions and voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities including opportunities to participate in school-based activities

Key Stage 4 pupils should be taught about:

- Human rights and international law
- The different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education

All schools should make provision for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education: drawing on good practice and publishing details of their PSHE education curriculum on their website. The Department for Education no longer provides a standardised programme of study for PSHE but advises schools to work with third sector agencies to develop their own PSHE curriculum and improve the quality of teaching.

For more information about curriculum links visit: **www.gov.uk**

5. Useful Definitions

Bisexual
An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to both men and women. 'Bi' is an acceptable, social shorthand for a bisexual person.

Bullying
Usually defined as repeated behaviour that is intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms including physical assault, teasing, making threats, name-calling, spreading rumours or writing offensive graffiti.

Cyberbullying
Bullying that is conducted online via e-mail, social networks, or messaging services or via mobile devices.

Discrimination
Unfair treatment of an individual or a group because of negative ideas about that individual or group.

Gay
An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to the same-sex. This word can apply to men or women.

Gender
The way a person presents their identity as either a man or a woman (or as transgender) through masculine or feminine behaviour.

Heterosexual
An emotional, sexual and physical attraction to someone of the opposite sex.

Heterosexism
The assumption that everyone is heterosexual unless someone is 'obviously' gay or lesbian because they are 'out'.

Homophobia
The resentment or fear of gay, lesbian or bisexual people.

Lesbian
A woman who is emotionally, sexually and physically attracted to women.

LGBT
Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

Prejudice
A judgement made about a person or group without knowing them. This is generally applied when the judgement is negative.

Sex
Someone's biological 'signature' as male or female.

Sexuality
The combination of emotional, sexual and physical attraction to someone of the opposite, same or either sex depending on that individual's sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation
Legislative term used to describe how an individual chooses to identify their sexuality as lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual.

Stereotype
A commonly held belief about a group of people that is fixed and over simplified. Stereotypes are often untrue and can be very offensive.

Transgender
An umbrella term for people who identify with a gender other than that assigned to them at birth. Not all transgender people undergo medical procedures.

Transphobia
Resentment or fear of transgender people.

Transsexual
A medical term for someone whose gender and biological sex differ, such as someone whose biological sex is male but who identifies as female. Transsexual people often pursue medical treatment to align their biological sex with their gender.

Someone who has had gender confirmation surgery will invariably refer to themselves as a man or a woman or 'trans' – not as a 'post-operative transsexual'!

6. Introductory Programme

About This Programme

This programme is aimed at Key Stage 3. It is designed for pupils in Year 7 or 8 but can be adapted for other age groups.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this programme pupils will have:

- Developed an understanding of homophobic bullying and its consequences
- Become familiar with issues of equality and diversity particularly with regards to sexual orientation
- Gained an understanding of the need to respect differences between people regardless of sexual orientation

Activity One:
Appropriate Language

40 minutes

Resources:
— Flipchart paper
— Marker pens
— Approximately 15 pre-inflated balloons

Explanation:
Prior to delivering this activity ensure you have discussed ground rules with the pupils. Explain to the class that you will be exploring homophobic bullying and ensure pupils understand the definition of key words such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

Separate the class into small groups and provide each with flipchart paper and pens. Ask the groups to divide their flipchart paper into 4 sections and title each section lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Ask each group to write down any words or phrases they associate with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. The words must not include names of people they know personally or people they presume to be gay or transgender.

After 5—10 minutes ask the pupils to feedback on their discussions. As they are feeding back write down the words and phrases they have identified on the balloons and display them at the front of the classroom. Discuss with the pupils if any of the words or phrases are offensive, incorrect or unfair. Place all the balloons featuring offensive, incorrect or unfair words on one side of the room and display all the balloons with appropriate language proudly at the front of the class. Reiterate to the pupils that they will only be using appropriate language throughout the programme. At the very end of the activity invite the pupils to burst the balloons featuring offensive, incorrect or unfair words to symbolise their unacceptability.

> "When people say bad things about being gay it can really upset people so I don't say gay in the 'wrong' way."
>
> ED, AGED 13

Activity Two:
What is Homophobic Bullying?

40 minutes

or

Resources:
- 'What is Homophobic Bullying?' (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Bullying, DVD Ch1 Film 1)
- Worksheet one: What is Homophobic Bullying?

Explanation:
Hand out the 'What is Homophobic Bullying?' worksheet.

Explain to the pupils that they are going to watch a film about young people's experiences of homophobic bullying and will need to complete the related worksheet. Once the pupils have completed their worksheets ask them to discuss their answers as a whole class.

Remind pupils that there are many forms of homophobic bullying which can all have negative consequences. Anyone can become the target of homophobic bullying regardless of their sexual orientation.

"Homophobic bullying makes me sad to think that people out there are constantly making others feel worthless just because they like people of the same sex!"

ABBIE, AGED 14

Activity Three: Why are Gay People Seen as 'Different'?

55 minutes

Resources:

— 'Coming Out' (Theme: Stereotypes and Expectations, DVD Ch4, Film 1)

Explanation:

Play the film 'Coming Out' and lead the class in a group discussion about the issue of 'coming out'. Ask the group to consider some of the following questions:

- Were they surprised by the ending of the film?
- Is it unusual for people to 'come out' as 'heterosexual'? If so, why?
- What makes us assume that people are heterosexual?
- How would you react if someone told you they were gay?
- Why do some people hide who they really are in certain situations?
- What might the negative consequences be of hiding who you are?

Write down the pupils' thoughts on the board. Using these notes as a prompt ask pupils individually to write a short piece about a time when they have had to reveal something personal that no-one else knew. It could be something minor like listening to an unpopular band. Ask them to consider how they felt revealing this information, how people reacted and what the person they told could have done to make them feel more comfortable and accepted when revealing this particular fact. Once the pupils have completed their writing invite them to share their work with the whole class.

Remind pupils that you can never assume someone is heterosexual, gay, bisexual or transgender unless they tell you. It is not being gay or transgender that makes some young people unhappy but the negative reaction of other people that they fear. Reassure pupils that if they have questions or wish to confide in someone about their own sexual orientation or gender identity they can discuss it with their teachers without fear of judgement.

"Pupils tease each other about being gay so some pupils might not want to come out yet and pretend the teasing is just a joke."

RACHEL, AGED 14

Activity Four:
Targeting Differences

55 minutes

Resources:
— 'Labelled' (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Language, DVD Ch2, Film 1)
— Post-it notes
— Worksheet Two: Respecting Difference Pledge

Explanation:
Divide the pupils into small groups and provide them with Post-it notes. Play the whole class the film 'Labelled'. Once the film is complete give each group two minutes to list all the taunts and insults they regularly hear around school.

Once the pupils have listed the insults invite them to group the common list of school insults into aspects of 'difference'. This may include appearance, size, intelligence, skin colour, faith, sexuality, gender or physical impairment.

Following this lead a class discussion on the questions below:

- What aspect of 'difference' attracts the most insults?
- In what situations are these insults used?
- What do these insults say about what is 'normal' and 'acceptable'?
- Where might messages of what is 'normal' and 'acceptable' come from?

As a plenary ask the whole class to complete Worksheet Two: Respecting Difference Pledge.

"When people say things like 'That's so gay' it affects people even if it's not directed at them."

MARK, AGED 14

Activity Five:
Tagged

40 minutes

Resources:
— Tagged (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Cyberbullying, DVD Ch. 3, Film 1)
— Worksheet Three: Tagged Characters

Explanation:
Separate the class into pairs and provide each pair with Worksheet 3: Tagged Characters. Play the 'Tagged' film to the whole class and once complete ask the pairs to answer the questions on the worksheet.

Once completed discuss the questions with the whole class. Capture on the whiteboard the pupils' thoughts about how each character might be feeling after the incident. Discuss what the pupils think should happen next for each of these young people. Remind pupils of the school's policy on cyberbullying, how they can report it and the support available.

"We were in charge. EACH didn't say to us we have to do this or we have to do that. We were able to develop our own ideas and it made us feel that we are good at something and that we are valued."

SHANNON, AGED 14

"Once you think about what you said and its meaning, using these words and insults sounds so stupid."

EMMA, AGED 13

Class Project:
Respecting Difference

Explanation:
As a class, revisit the Respecting Difference Pledge from Activity Four: Targeting Differences. Focussing on actions that the pupils can take within their school community, ask the class to plan a 'Respecting Difference' awareness-raising campaign. The pupils could design posters, t-shirts and banners to raise awareness and invite other pupils around the school to sign a whole-school 'Respecting Difference' pledge.

Resources:
— Completed Worksheet Two: Respecting Difference Pledge sheet
— Marker pens, paints
— Card of assorted colour and sizes
— Plain t-shirts

Worksheet 1a

'What is Homophobic Bullying?'

Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group which is usually repeated over time. Its purpose is to intentionally hurt either another individual or group emotionally and sometimes physically.

It is homophobic bullying when it involves negative feelings or attitudes towards lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people.

What types of homophobic bullying do the young people in the film discuss?
(circle as appropriate):

Physical assaults

Being left out

Name calling

Death threats

Vandalism

Intimidating looks

Gossip

Sexual harassment

Cyberbullying

In pairs discuss whether some types of homophobic bullying are worse than others. Explain your thoughts below.....

Worksheet 1b

'What is Homophobic Bullying?'

Write down four words to describe how the homophobic bullying made the young people feel?

1

2

3

4

Why were some young people the target of homophobic bullying?

Worksheet 2:
Respecting Difference Pledge

I can respect other people's differences and celebrate equality as an individual by...

a local community by...

We can respect other people's differences and celebrate equality as...

a school community by...

a nation by...

Worksheet 3:
Tagged Characters

Dave

Is what Dave experienced bullying? Why?

How do you think Dave is feeling right now? Why?

What could Dave do next?

Bill

What is good about Bill's stance?

What could Bill do next?

Jessica

What might have been Jessica's motivation to 'frape' Dave's phone?

Is homophobic 'fraping' worse than other forms? Or less serious? Why?

What could Jessica do next?

7. Intermediate Programme

About This Programme

This programme is aimed at Key Stage 3. It is designed for pupils in Year 9 but can be adapted for other age groups.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this programme pupils will have:

- Developed an understanding of homophobic bullying, its causes and consequences
- Familiarised themselves with the relationship between homophobic attitudes, sexist attitudes and gender stereotyping
- Gained an understanding of the impact of prejudice-based language online and offline
- Considered ways of challenging homophobic and sexist attitudes

Activity One:
Is Homophobic Bullying a Problem?

40 minutes

Resources:
— Agree/disagree signs

Explanation:
Before the lesson set up the room by displaying the definition of homophobic bullying and placing notices in three corners stating: 'agree', 'disagree' and 'unsure'. Once the pupils arrive highlight that you will be discussing homophobic bullying and check that they all understand the definition.

Explain to the group that each corner of the room represents a position such as 'Agree', 'Disagree' or 'Unsure'. You will read out some statements about homophobic bullying and the pupils will need to take a place in the corner that reflects how they feel about the statement. Example statements could include:

- I have heard homophobic name calling in our school. For example 'You're such a bender'
- I've seen homophobic name calling on social media sites such as Facebook
- Girls in our school get picked on if they're not 'girly' enough and boys get picked on if they're not 'manly' enough
- The word gay is used in our school as a negative. For example, 'That's so gay!'
- If I was gay I would feel comfortable telling my classmates without fear of being bullied or picked on
- If I saw another pupil being homophobically bullied I would stand up for them

Each time the pupils take a position invite one or two pupils to present their arguments to the class. If the other pupils hear an argument they feel is particularly persuasive they should move position. You can also join in with the debate offering your own views and advocating for robust arguments.

Remind pupils that our viewpoints can change and we should be adaptable to other people's opinions. Highlight the most constructive and persuasive ways of expressing our views and opinions is in a way that is rational, informed and does not seek to offend others. From this discussion establish some ground rules for the rest of the programme.

> "I had a great time in secondary school and didn't really have any issues surrounding homophobic bullying but doing this made me remember other people that may have."
>
> TRAVIS, AGED 17

Activity Two:

Why do we see Homophobic Bullying? 55 minutes

Resources:

— 'Why Do We See Homophobic Bullying?' (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Bullying, DVD Ch. 1, Film 2)
— Worksheet 4: Issues Tree

Explanation:

Prepare for the class by drawing an 'Issues Tree' outline on the board (see worksheet 4 for an example). Divide the pupils into small groups and play the film 'Why do we see homophobic bullying'. Provide each group with a piece of flipchart paper and ask the pupils to draw an 'issues tree' identifying the causes, effects of and solutions to homophobic bullying in school. Ask them to consider the arguments presented by the young people in the film as well as their own reasons.

Key causes to draw out:

- Homophobic language such as 'That's so gay!'
- Expectations around how boys and girls should behave
- Negative stereotypes and attitudes about gay people
- Assumption that everyone is heterosexual
- Family influence
- Non-inclusive school culture

Once each group has created their issue tree ask them to present their thoughts back to the class. As an extension activity the pupils may want to develop their issue trees into displays for the classroom.

"There is so much stigma around being gay but people don't want to talk about it."

CHARLIE, AGED 17

"We do not need to be reminded that we will be punished for using homophobic language. We already know that we will be. Instead it would be best to inform pupils of how much of an impact this homophobic language can have on other people."

LAURA, AGED 15

Activity Three:
Makeover

55 minutes

Resources:
— Makeover
(Theme: Stereotypes and Expectations, DVD Ch. 4, Film 2)
— Paper tablecloths or A1 flipchart paper
— Marker pens
— Printed questions

Explanation:
Set up the classroom to feature five tables and upon each one place a paper tablecloth and marker pens. Print out five questions about the 'Makeover' film such as:

- Why are the other girls picking on Gemma?
- Do you recognise this kind of behaviour in our school?
- Do you think boys experience this kind of bullying?
- What do you think the effects of this type of bullying are?
- What would you have done if you were Gemma?

Play the whole class the 'Makeover' film. Once the film has finished divide the class into small mixed gender groups, assign each group a table and a question about 'Makeover'. Invite the pupils to discuss the question and jot down their thoughts on the tablecloth. After 5-10 minutes the groups should swap tables and respond to another question. Repeat this process until all the groups have discussed and responded to each question.

At the end of the activity summarise the pupils' thoughts and explain that sexist bullying affects everyone: liming our freedom of expression and individuality.

> "We wanted to show what it is like for girls and boys who break away from gender expectations and the bullying they can experience."
>
> ESME, AGED 14

Activity Four:
So Gay

55 minutes

Resources:
— So Gay
— (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Language, DVD Ch. 2, Film 2)
— Envelopes
— Postcards

Explanation:
Set up the class by preparing a set of envelopes featuring statements about homophobic language on blank postcards. For example the following statements could be used:

- People should be allowed to say anything they want
- There are some things that are so offensive they should never be said
- Calling someone a name is OK if it is meant as a joke between friends.
- People are called gay as an insult if they do not behave like a typical girl or a typical boy
- Anyone can be called gay. It doesn't matter. We say it to 'normal' people to insult them.
- People who say they are offended by the phrase 'That's so gay!' are just being over-sensitive
- The repeated use of the phrase 'That's so gay!' creates a hostile environment for gay people
- I know how it feels to have an aspect of my identity described as rubbish, dysfunctional or wrong on a daily basis
- It is easy to challenge the use of homophobic language within school

Divide the class into small groups and provide each group with an envelope. Play the whole class the film 'So Gay'. Once finished, invite each group to discuss and debate the statements in their envelopes. After 20 minutes invite the groups to select a statement with which they agree or disagree most strongly. In turn ask each group to present to the whole class their argument for or against their chosen statement.

Remind the pupils that using the word gay in a negative way is not acceptable and contributes to homophobic environments. Being gay is not wrong, bad or negative and using the word in this way is unacceptable.

> "In order to tackle homophobia and gender inequality it is important to target the simple things first."
>
> KALTUN, AGED 17.

Activity Five:
Tweets

40 minutes

Resources:
— Tweets (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Cyberbullying, DVD Ch. 3, Film 2)
— Nohomophobes.com

Explanation:
Place the pupils into pairs and play the whole class the 'Tweets' film. Explain that the film was inspired by the website Nohomophobes.com. The website is designed as a 'social mirror' to reflect the pervasiveness of casual homophobic language in society by keeping a counter of how frequently the words 'faggot, 'dyke', 'no homo' and 'so gay' are used on Twitter. In their pairs invite the pupils to discuss the film and website. Questions could include:

- What did you think of the Nohomophobes website?
- How familiar are you with this language use online?
- How serious is the use of words such as 'faggot, 'dyke', 'no homo' and 'so gay' on social media?
- Would you count the use of homophobic language online as cyberbullying? If so, why?
- What are the potential consequences of using this language online where it is publicly available and can appear on a site such as Nohomophobes.com?
- How could you challenge this use of language online?

After 10-15 minutes invite the pupils to feedback their thoughts about the film and website. Highlight that once insulting comments and phrases are posted online they lose control of who sees it or where it goes. Increasingly employers and universities are looking in at what candidates are doing online, denounce the use of offensive language and disregard candidates.

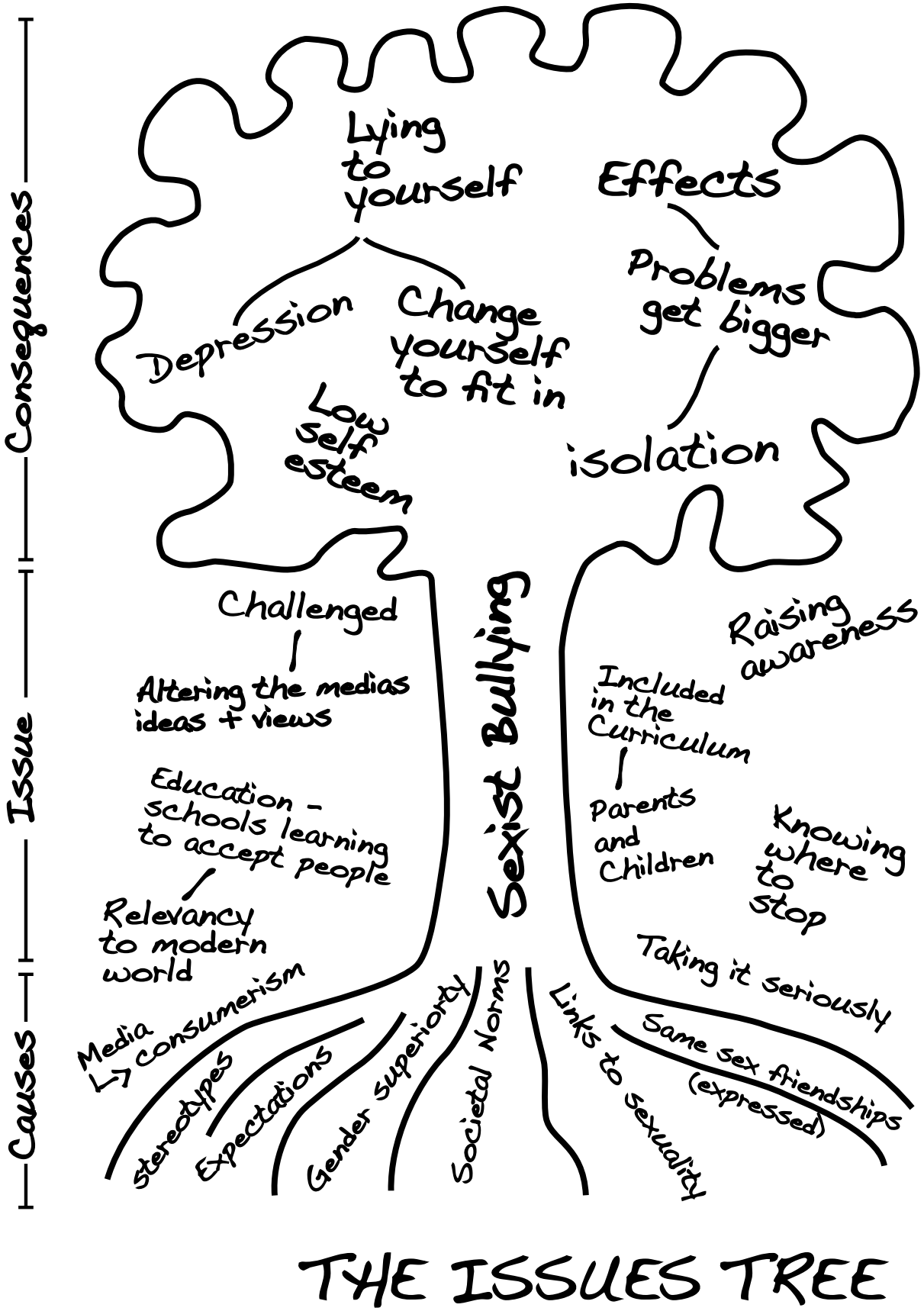
Class Project:
Attitude Survey

Explanation:
Explain to the class that they will be devising and carrying out an attitudes survey about prejudice-based language in the school. Invite the pupils to reflect on their discussions throughout the programme to devise their own questions about prejudice-based language. It may be helpful for them to review their Issue Trees from Activity Two as a prompt.

Once the pupils have created their attitudes survey ask them to consider ways of promoting it across the school to gather as many anonymous responses from their peers as possible. Support the pupils in distributing the survey widely around the school. Once the survey has been completed, collate the responses and discuss with the class. Ask the pupils to consider ways of disseminating the findings either through an assembly or a display board in the school.

Resources:
— Completed Issues Tree

Worksheet 4:
Issues Tree



Sexting Activities

ABOUT THIS PROGRAMME

This programme is aimed at Key Stage 3. It is designed for pupils in Year 9 but can be adapted for other age groups.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this programme pupils will have:

- Explored different reasons why young people generate and share sexual messages
- Considered the emotional, reputational and legal consequences of sexting
- Understood the ease with which digital pictures can be copied, shared and manipulated

WHY SEXTING?

Sexting is an amalgamation of the word sex and texting. It describes a variety of actions in which young people use technology to explore sex and relationships, but is commonly understood to involve the 'exchange of sexual messages or images' through mobile and web devices (NSPCC, 2012).

This is not a phenomenon exclusive to young people. The practice of sexting amongst young people has however been the subject of increasing media attention and a number of research studies. These studies indicate that young people are aware of sexting and engaging in the practice without necessarily considering the potential emotional, reputational and legal consequences.

The Reach Steering Group wanted young people to be more aware of the risks and consequences of sexting but felt that current interventions focused on overly simplistic danger messages. It was also felt that blame was disproportionately placed on the person in the picture (usually assumed to be a girl) and not those who take, share or distribute it. In addition, the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender young people are often overlooked. Teachers and others working with young people need to adopt a sensitive, proactive and inclusive approach to discussing sexting if young people are to take the key messages on board.

Activity One:
Why do Young People Sext?

40 minutes

Resources:
- Where's the Harm? (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Cyberbullying, DVD Ch. 3, Film 3)
- Flipchart paper
- Post-it notes
- Pens

Explanation:
Separate the class into small groups and provide each group with flipchart paper and pens. Play the whole class the film 'Where's the Harm?' Ask each group to divide their flipchart paper into three sections and title the sections: the girl, the boyfriend and the friends. Invite the pupils to discuss the sexting incident from the point of view of each character. Ask them to write down the reasons for sexting on Post-it notes and stick them on the appropriate section of the flipchart paper. The reasons can be repeated and shared by different characters.

Feedback to the class the different reasons identified. Highlight that sexting can lead to harassment and bullying. For example, in the film the girl's boyfriend and friends shared the images with a wider audience than intended. As a plenary, discuss the negative reaction of the teacher in the film 'Where's the Harm?' Ask the pupils to consider the response they would expect from school staff if they were to report an incident of sexting. Reassure pupils that they can report such incidents without fear of judgement. Explain the school policy and procedure with regards to sexting, how to report it and the support available.

> "I think it is important for teachers and youth workers to know what they are talking about. If they seem out of touch young people can tell."
>
> JUDITH, AGED 17

Activity Two:
What are the Risks of Sexting?

55 minutes

Resources:
— Worksheet 5: Sexting Scenarios
— Worksheet 6: Sexting Scenarios Answers

Explanation:
In pairs give the pupils the list of different scenarios in which a young person creates a self-generated image. Ask them to discuss and identify in which scenarios the young person is breaking the law. Reiterate that the law is designed to protect young people not criminalise them. Once they have agreed which scenarios are illegal ask each pair to join with another to mark their work. Explain which scenarios are breaking the law and why (see Worksheet 6).

Remaining in their small groups invite the pupils to discuss what happens next in the scenarios for James, Debbie, Robbie, Rachel and Jaz and consider what the emotional and reputational consequences of generating those images may be. Ask each group to feedback to the class their thoughts.

Remind pupils that sexting can have serious ramifications for all young people involved. Explain the school policy and procedure with regards to sexting, how to report it and the support available.

> "People lie on the internet and ask you inappropriate questions to which you are more likely to respond."
>
> GEM, AGED 17

Worksheet 5:
Sexting Scenarios

James, Age 15

At school James has been seeing his classmate Lucy for a month. They often exchange text messages outside of school and the messages have become increasingly flirtatious and suggestive. They have not discussed sex in person however James thinks that Lucy might have sex with him at a birthday party of a mutual friend. As the flirting escalates, James decides to take a picture of his penis and send it to Lucy. She does not reply and breaks up with him at the party.

Debbie, Age 16

For her 16th birthday Debbie had her nipple pierced. A friend from Debbie's old school is thinking of getting a piercing also, and asks Debbie to send her a picture of hers. Debbie takes a photo of her breasts and sends it to her friend via a private Facebook message.

Rachel, Age 15

Rachel has recently found out that her best friends Amy and Jess are in a romantic relationship. Although the relationship is supposed to be a secret Rachel decides to tell her boyfriend and his friends about it. The boys think it is funny and superimpose pictures of Amy and Jess into pornographic images. Rachel posts the mocked-up pictures online and it quickly goes viral around her school.

Robbie, Age 18

One evening Robbie is on Facebook and a picture pops-up in his newsfeed of a girl he recognises from the year below at college. The girl is in her underwear and laying in a suggestive pose on her bed. The picture has been edited so the word 'slut' appears on the girl's forehead. Robbie clicks 'like' and shares the image with his friends.

Steve, Age 19

Steve and his boyfriend Ian have been in a relationship for a year. They are both about to start university but in different parts of the country. They have decided to stay together and have a long distance relationship. When they are apart at university Steve and Ian use a photo messaging application on their phone to send each other topless and suggestive pictures.

Jaz, Age 15

Jaz identifies as transgender and is in the process of transitioning at school. Whereas Jaz used to identify as male and be called Jason she now comes to school presenting as female. She wears make-up and girls' clothes at school and at home. Many of Jaz's friends have stopped talking to her since she started transitioning.

In the evenings Jaz spends a lot of time on chat rooms, sometimes speaking to adults in other countries. One evening whilst talking to an older man on a chat room Jaz is asked to switch on her webcam. Jaz agrees and the man to whom she is chatting says lots of nice things about her appearance. The compliments escalate and the man asks Jaz to take off her clothes. She removes some items of clothing but becomes uncomfortable and logs out of the chat room.

Worksheet 6:
Sexting Scenarios Answers

James, Age 15

It is illegal to create and share indecent photos of anyone under the age of 18. It is also sexual harassment to send unwanted materials of a sexual nature.

Debbie, Age 16

It is illegal to create and share indecent photos of anyone under the age of 18. In addition, despite it being a private Facebook message it could still be possible for someone to access and share the images further if Debbie or her friend left their Facebook unlocked on a computer or mobile device.

Rachel, Age 15

It is illegal to create and share indecent photos of anyone under the age of 18. This includes pseudo-photographs such as mocked up images.

Robbie, Age 18

It is illegal to share indecent photos of anyone under the age of 18. Robbie is complicit in the sharing of these images despite not being involved in their creation.

Steve, Age 19

It is not illegal for two consenting adults (over the age of 18) to exchange sexual images. There are always risks however that the images might be spread beyond the intended audience.

Jaz, Age 15

It is illegal for a person to encourage and coerce someone into undressing on a webcam especially if it is an adult coercing someone under the age of 18. It is not Jaz who is breaking the law but the man to whom she is talking. Jaz should tell a trusted adult or report to CEOP.

Handling Disclosures

As a result of some of the discussions, pupils may disclose incidents of a sensitive nature. These may be about themselves or someone they know. Here are some courses of action to consider:

- Never promise confidentiality to any pupil. Explain to the pupil what you are going to do with the information and why
- Liaise with the designated Child Protection Officer within the school or organisation
- Write down exactly what the pupil has disclosed in their own words (do not ask leading questions or interrupt) and pass on any evidence to the Child Protection Officer
- Involve the pupil in the process and offer them the opportunity to be alongside you when you report to the designated Child Protection Officer in the school

For further information and support about sexting please refer to the Child Exploitation and Online Protect Centre **ceop.police.uk**

8. Advanced Programme

About This Programme

This programme is aimed at Key Stage 4 and 5. It is designed for pupils in Years 10 and 11 but can be adapted for other age groups.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this programme pupils will have:

- Developed an understanding of homophobic bullying, its causes, consequences and impact
- Gained an understanding of resilience and how to support people who have been targeted by prejudice
- Considered where homophobic prejudice comes from, how it manifests itself in wider society as well as around the world
- Explored opportunities to challenge homophobic and sexist attitudes and promote equality

Activity One:
LGBT Rights Quiz

55 minutes

Resources:
— Worksheet 6: Example LGBT Rights Quiz

Explanation:
Prepare for the session by devising a quiz on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. This could include questions on LGBT rights in the UK, LGBT rights across the world, a picture round of famous gay or transgender faces and other topical questions on gay and transgender people. See Worksheet 6: Example LGBT Rights Quiz.

> "We condemn countries across the world for their treatment of gay people but it's not that long ago that we had similar laws operating in the UK."
>
> TOM, AGED 18

Place the pupils into small teams and explain that they are to complete a team quiz on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. Ensure everyone understands the meaning of these key words. Ask the pupils to write down their answers on a sheet of paper. Once the quiz has finished read out the answers and invite the teams to mark each other's work (see Worksheet 6). Award the team with the most correct answers with a small prize. At the end of the quiz discuss with the group whether they were surprised by any of the answers. Use this discussion to highlight how gay and transgender people have suffered terrible oppression throughout history and many continue to in countries around the world today.

Activity Two:
Seeking Support

55 minutes

Resources:
— Worksheet 7: Dear Deidre
— Worksheet 8: Seeking Support

Explanation:
Place the pupils into pairs and provide each pair with the Dear Deidre worksheet. Ask the pairs to discuss the following:

- Why do you think disliking sport and being non-violent made the author a target of homophobia?
- If a girl liked playing sport and was aggressive do you think she would receive the same treatment?
- What does this say about our expectations of how girls and boys should behave?
- Deidre states that the bullying is a 'sign of anxiety' and the bullies are afraid of their 'feminine feelings'. Do you think this is true? Why?
- Why is the author embarrassed to talk to his teachers about the bullying?
- What support is available in our school for someone experiencing this type of bullying?

Invite some of the pupils to feedback their answers to the whole class. Highlight that homophobic bullying does not just impact upon lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender pupils but limits the individuality and freedom of expression of all young people.

"We need more awareness-raising campaigns around school so people know that homophobic and sexist bullying is unacceptable. It is also good to know who you can go to for support like your tutor or EACH."

RYAN, AGED 16

"It is important not to dismiss name-calling as a minor issue and understand that someone else may have suffered in a similar situation."

NELLIE, AGED 15

Activity Three:
Gay Visibility

55 minutes

Resources:
- How are Gay People Portrayed in the Media?
- (Theme: Stereotypes and Expectations, DVD Ch. 4, Film 3)
- Post-it notes

Explanation:

Divide the class into small groups and play the film 'How are Gay People Portrayed in the Media?' Ask each group to think of a famous gay person or character. On Post-it notes write down traits of this person or character. After 5-10 minutes invite the pupils to feedback on the gay figure they were discussing and the traits they identified. Record the pupils' thoughts on the board and ask them to consider whether they think any of the traits are common to all gay people.

Explain that people can sometimes assume that all gay people are alike. For example that all gay men have great dress-sense or all lesbians are butch. Highlight that these beliefs are stereotypes that are oversimplified, frequently untrue and can be very offensive.

Ask the pupils to identify any further stereotypes about gay people and discuss:

- Where do we see/hear these stereotypes portrayed? For example in the news, on TV, in films or at school?
- What do the stereotypes have in common?
- Are any of the stereotypes funny? If so, why?
- How are these stereotypes dangerous or damaging?
- How do stereotypes affect the way we behave?
- How can these stereotypes be challenged?

Explain that stereotypes lead to prejudice and discrimination. The assumption that all gay people are alike leads to pre-judging gay or transgender people. It can also mean that the many gay people who do not fit these stereotypes feel invisible and voiceless.

"There are a lot of stereotypes in the media so gay people are seen as abnormal and lesbians and bisexuals are hardly represented. We need more positive media for all gay people."

LEILA, AGED 14

Activity Four:
Haunted

40 minutes

Resources:
— Haunted
(Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Language, DVD Ch. 2, Film 3)
— Flipchart paper
— Marker pens

Explanation:
Divide the class into small groups and provide each with flipchart paper and marker pens. Play the film Haunted and ask the groups to discuss and write down their answers to the following questions:

- Why might Ben think this language is being used by the others?
- How could Ben's past experiences have influenced his response in this situation?
- How could Ben have been better supported in this situation by his peers and by the adults in the film?
- Have you ever felt insecure going into a new situation? How did you cope with this?

Invite the groups to feedback one key point from each of their discussions. As an extension activity ask the groups to come up with a definition of resilience and an example of a time when they have been resilient. Highlight that resilience is about bouncing back, asking for help and expressing how we feel.

"What you might think is a 'small thing' can be the most important thing in that young person's life."

ALEX, AGED 16

Activity Five:
Social Media and Prejudice

40 minutes or

Resources:
— 'What is the Impact of Social Media on Homophobic Bullying?'
— (Theme: Homophobic and Sexist Cyberbullying, DVD Ch. 3, Film 4)
— Worksheet 9: Social Media Activity Cards

Explanation:
Play the film 'What is the Impact of Social Media on Homophobic Bullying?' Separate the class into pairs and provide each with a set of activity cards from Worksheet 9: Social Media Activity Cards. Explain that the pairs need to sort the activities into two piles: positive and negative impact. Once the pairs have sorted their cards invite them to join with another pair and discuss how they have sorted the activities. Tell the pupils to consider the following:

- Are there differences? If so, why?
- Were specific cards harder to categorise? If so, why?
- What could be the impact on the individual's life for some of the cards (e.g. applications to college, university or jobs)?

Invite some groups to feedback on their discussions. As a whole class consider options for minimising risks on social media and responding to prejudice-based bullying online. As a homework activity invite pupils to create their own Top Ten E-Safety Tips.

"It's easier to be abusive over the phone or on the internet because you don't have to see the person you are insulting."

CARLY, AGED 14

"Just because someone is different from you does not entitle you to tease them. Everyone is different and when you are older it is this quality that you love about people."

JESS, AGED 21

Class Project:
Dear Year 7 Me

Explanation:
Using the film 'Dear Year 7 Me' as a prompt, explain to the pupils that they will be planning a peer led anti-bullying project for younger pupils. Remind the class of their earlier discussion about prejudice and stereotyping asking them to consider:

- What were their fears and anxieties when they first started secondary school?
- What did they do in order to 'fit in' when they were younger?
- How have they changed through school?
- What do they wish they had been told when they first started secondary school?

Invite the pupils to use their responses as a platform for an assembly or workshop for younger pupils on prejudice-based bullying. The pupils can use the film 'Dear Year 7 Me' or create their own dramatised version of the film. If they are delivering a workshop the pupils may want to use or adapt activities from this resource.

Worksheet 6:
Example LGBT Rights Quiz

Round 1:
LGBT Rights In The Uk

1. **When was 'homosexuality' decriminalised in the UK?**
   Answer: *1967*

2. **What did Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 prohibit?**
   Answer: *The teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of 'homosexuality' as a pretended family relationship. It was repealed in 2003.*

3. **In what year did the first same-sex marriages take place in the UK?**
   Answer: *2014*

4. **True or false: It is legal for an employer not to hire or promote someone because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender?**
   Answer: *False, in 2003 a law was put in place to make it illegal for employers to discriminate against applicants based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.*

5. **When was the Gender Recognition Act passed into law and what did it do?**
   Answer: *2004. The act gives legal recognition to transsexual people in their acquired gender.*

Round 2:
LGBT Rights Around The World

1. **In what year was the word 'homosexual' coined?**
   Answer: *1869 by Hungarian psychologist Karl Benkert.*

2. **Which was the first country to legalize same-sex marriage?**
   Answer: *The Netherlands in April 1st, 2001*

3. **In which city in the United States did the Stonewall riots take place?**
   Answer: *New York*

4. **Where and when was the worlds' first openly gay Prime Minister elected?**
   Answer: *Iceland, 2009 Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir*

5. **True or false: Gender reassignment is illegal in Iran?**
   Answer: *False, gender reassignment has been legal in Iran since 1979. Sexual relations between lesbians or gay men are punishable by death.*

Round 3:
Famous LGBT Faces

Create a picture round of famous LGBT people and why they are famous. For example:

- **Alan Turing** (mathematician)
- **Stephen Fry** (comedian/presenter)
- **Clare Balding** (presenter/sports journalist)
- **Stephen K Amos** (comedian)
- **Sue Perkins** (actor/presenter)
- **Derren Brown** (magician)
- **Debbie Harry** (musician)
- **Nicola Adams** (Olympic boxing champion)
- **Laverne Cox** (actor)

Worksheet Seven:
Dear Deidre

DEAR DEIDRE – TEEN WORRIES
THE SUN
PUBLISHED: 16TH JUNE 2011

CRUEL BULLIES MAKE MY LIFE HELL

I am the victim of homophobic bullying and I am not even gay.

I am 15 now but the problem started when I was in lower school. I used to hang around with girls mostly rather than boys. I do have male friends too now I am in higher school but I still hang around with girls.

I have always felt safer with the female crowd. As time has gone by I like sports less and less and I don't like violence in any shape or form. I hate fighting and I am very much a pacifist.

I got more in touch with my feminine side and it started to show, not by the way I act or anything but because apparently I have a gay voice.

I was only in Year Six when the first bully accused me of being gay. Now everyone has got it into their head that I am homosexual. I have always said that I am not and I have tried every come-back under the sun but they always win.

Many times I have come home crying because people called me gay. I am getting depressed and it has happened so much I have even questioned my own sexuality because of the name-calling but I know I am straight.

I have thought about suicide but I know that is not the way. I hate talking to my mum about it and my dad will believe the bullies if I tell him. I am embarrassed to talk to my Head of Year about it.

The bullies have even begun to attack me on Facebook now. The homophobia in my school is just too much and I can't take it any longer.

DEAR DEIDRE – TEEN WORRIES
THE SUN
PUBLISHED: 16TH JUNE 2011

DEIDRE SAYS

What these bullies are doing is cruel and a sign of anxiety in them. They are afraid of their own feminine feelings and think they will come over as more masculine if they mock and bully someone else.

Tell your proper friends how you feel and how much you suffer so that you at least know you have their support.

Ask your Mum to speak to the Head again but also to one of the school governors this time. Homophobia is supposed to be stamped out in schools but this is not happening in yours. Every school has to have a plan for dealing with bullying too.

Concentrate on your schoolwork and doing well so you can follow your career of choice. The more you achieve, the better you will feel about yourself and the less easy it is for others to put you down. Appearing to be confident is important too. I'm e-mailing you a leaflet 'Are you being bullied?' which explains self-help tactics and sources of help.

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia) has a freephone Actionline for young people affected by homophobic bullying.

EACH's Actionline
Are you the target of homophobic or transphobic bullying?

EACH provides award-winning support to young people experiencing homophobic or transphobic bullying anywhere in England. Our Actionline is the place to click or call – in confidence.

Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00
0808 1000 143
eachaction.org.uk/support

Worksheet Eight:
Seeking Support

DILEMMA

I am a girl of 14 and I have known I was a lesbian since I was 13 years old. I go to a small school and nearly everyone in my year is homophobic having grown-up in a sheltered, narrow-minded area.

I can't sit down at lunch near a certain very homophobic girl clique because I'm scared they'll do something. In the past they've 'accidentally' tipped my lunch all over my lap and last summer they poured milk in my hair.

I haven't told my mum about the bullying because every other time I've tried to speak to her about it she has dismissed me as a drama queen. I don't know what to do or who to talk to.

RESPONSE

Worksheet Nine:
Social Media Activity Cards

Someone you don't know follows you on instagram

A friend uploads a video publicly as part of a national campaign for LGBT rights

You come to school to find that all your classmates already know what you did at the weekend

A prospective employer sees your twitter account is full of offensive jokes and swear words

You post a comedy picture of a friend on Tumblr and it goes viral

Your Facebook newsfeed is full of sexist and homophobic content posted by Facebook friends

A friend changes their gender identity on Facebook

You are sent a link to a website featuring insulting content about a classmate

A social media page set up for your band receives 500 visits

Your blog posts are featured on a national news site

9. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Homophobia?

Homophobia is a resentment or fear of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. At its most benign it is voiced as a passive dislike of gay people. At its worst it involves active victimisation: targeting an individual. Homophobia can also affect people who are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, someone who has an association with gay people or someone who does not conform to stereotypical expectations of masculine or feminine behaviour.

2. What is Transphobia?

Transphobia is the resentment or fear of transgender people and gender diversity. Our society and culture regularly reinforces ideas around how girls, boys, men and women should behave and present themselves. When people do not fit these stereotypes they can become the target of transphobic abuse.

3. What is Homophobic or Transphobic Bullying or Harassment?

Just like any form of bullying or harassment, homophobia or transphobia can be **direct** such as name calling or physical assault or **indirect** such as spreading rumours or writing offensive graffiti. It can also be conducted online or via mobile devices. This is known as cyberbullying. Individuals or groups can be affected specifically if they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender or thought to be by others. What makes it different from other forms of bullying or harassment is the personal motivation and prejudice which drives it.

4. Why Does Homophobic or Transphobic Bullying Happen?

Homophobia and transphobia in young people is the fear of and reaction to gay and transgender people. People can have little understanding of these identities and simply be reacting to people seen as "different".

Most prejudice-based bullying takes place at a time when young people are unsure about their own developing identity. It often reflects an anxiety within young people about their identity as we receive confusing messages from society about what it means to be 'a man' or 'a woman', and stereotypes of what it means to be gay, lesbian or bisexual.

5. Who gets Homophobically or Transphobically Bullied or Harassed?

Anyone can become a target of homophobic or transphobic bullying or harassment regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We find that the following are common reasons why someone may be targeted:

- Young people who have misjudged their best friend by confiding in them only to find themselves 'outed' before they are ready
- Heterosexual girls and boys who others think of as lesbian, gay or bisexual. These young people are often mocked based on stereotypes of what it means to be lesbian, gay or bisexual
- Young people who do not conform to ideas about how girls and boys should behave
- Friends of lesbian, gay or bisexual people are frequently forced to face up to their own prejudices, fears and preconceptions whilst finding themselves targets 'by association'
- Young people with lesbian, gay or bisexual parents or siblings

6. Is Homophobia and Transphobia a Major Issue?

Research regularly highlights that homophobic and transphobic abuse is all too common in the UK.

A 2014 survey of 7,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people aged 16-25 found that:

- 3 in 4 had experienced name calling
- 1 in 2 had experienced threats or intimidation
- 1 in 4 had been physically assaulted

(Youth Chances, 2014)

It is also important to remember that anyone can be the target of homophobic or transphobic bullying regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Research that solely reflects the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people, whilst providing valuable information, will underestimate the significance of the problem and the impact it has on everyone.

7. What Should Schools do to Prevent Homophobic or Transphobic Bullying?

Overall, there is a clear legal framework for schools and other agencies to work within backed up by national policy guidance:

- Education Act 2011
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

Many schools do have effective strategies in place to address homophobic bullying and promote equality. In settings where teachers are clear that homophobic bullying will not be tolerated, and know they will be supported to challenge it when it does occur, we find that homophobic bullying is dealt with very effectively. These schools work with their young people to ensure the message gets across and that any incidents of homophobic bullying are dealt with appropriately and consistently.

8. Is Being Gay the Problem?

It is not being gay that makes some young people unhappy. It is the negative reaction of other people that gay people fear: coming to terms with being 'different' and coping with it that is difficult. It is even harder if this has to be done in secrecy from family, friends and teachers.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people of all ages can find themselves emotionally exhausted by having to reconcile how they feel inside with the problems others have in coming to terms with their sexuality.

9. Is the Phrase 'That's So Gay' Homophobic?

Over the years EACH has worked with many young people who are upset and frustrated by the persistent use of 'gay' as a derogatory term. This use of language does not always equate to bullying as many young people use it to refer to an inanimate object or an unfortunate situation. It is, however, a 'micro-aggression' reinforcing on a daily basis the idea that being gay is somehow stupid, broken, rubbish or wrong. This language sends a very clear and negative message to gay young people and can make them feel worthless.

10. How Does Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying Differ from Other Forms of Prejudice-based Bullying?

Prejudice-based bullying is an umbrella term which refers to pupils being targeted because of who they are or who they are perceived to be. This can be on the grounds of race, faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation or age. Homophobic and transphobic bullying fit under the umbrella of prejudice-based bullying yet all kinds of bullying differ in the motivations behind them and the way pupils experience it. Homophobic and transphobic bullying will be expressions of specific assumptions and prejudices and have different roots to other forms of prejudice-based bullying.

Pupils experiencing racist, faith-based, sexist and ageist bullying will frequently have family or friends who can relate to their experience. Pupils identifying as gay or transgender however can often feel 'invisible', and assume their family or friends will reject them if they find out they are gay. For similar reasons pupils who are not gay or transgender will fear the assumption that they are. As a result homophobic and transphobic bullying is one of the least reported forms of bullying as pupils do not want aspersions cast on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

10. Further Support from EACH

Actionline

Since 2003 EACH has been providing expert and confidential support to young people suffering homophobic or transphobic bullying. To date EACH's Actionline has supported over 6,000 young people nationally experiencing everything from name-calling and offensive texts or tweets to, all too frequently, physical assaults. Anyone in England contacting EACH, up to the age of eighteen, secures award-winning, free, one-to-one professional help and guidance.

Monday to Friday 9:00 to 17:00
0808 1000 143
eachaction.org.uk/support

Training

Would your Children and Young People's Service, school, academy, college, Pupil Referral Unit or other young people's setting benefit from consultation, policy assessment or bespoke training regarding sexual orientation, gender identity or cyber-safety matters?

EACH is best placed to support your school in navigating the requirements of Ofsted's Inspection Framework and we are consulted regularly by the Department for Education, Ofsted and Government Equalities Office on homophobic and transphobic bullying.

EACH's awareness-raising and support sessions are delivered widely to education professionals, youth workers and wrap around services in both conference and seminar settings: providing strategies to challenge homophobic, transphobic or cyberbullying through positive, constructive and tested methods.

0117 946 7607
eachaction.org.uk/training

Our training and support topics include:

How to challenge

- Homophobic language and bullying
- Prejudice-based cyberbullying

Bespoke Guide and Support

- Legal responsibilities
- Ofsted requirements

Practical strategies

- Opening up a dialogue with young people: how to use the Reach Teaching Resource
- Online safety, sexting, 'selfies' and social media
- Addressing gay or transgender equality in the curriculum
- Supporting young people

USEFUL LINKS

Anti-Bullying Alliance
anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Bullying Intervention Group
bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
ceop.police.uk

Gender Identity Research and Education Society
gires.org.uk

ADDITIONAL NOTES

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Educational Action Challenging Homophobia

- **Actionline**
- **Training and Education**
- **Resources and Guidance**
- **Conferences and Seminars**
- **Cyberbullying and E-safety**
- **Youth Engagement**

eachaction.org.uk

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