



TALKING ABOUT POVERTY

Welcome participants to the session and display the Group Agreement created in the previous session for all to see. You could always read through this again, especially if people are participating virtually, to ensure everyone understands it.

1 ICEBREAKER

This should take about 15 minutes. For more details about how to run this activity, see Meeting one on page 30.



2 POVERTY QUIZ

30 mins

Aim: Starting with a quiz is a light-hearted way to get people thinking about what poverty is, and what it means for themselves and their local area.

It highlights how common perceptions and misconceptions about poverty can have an impact on children, young people and families living in poverty.



Facts and figures about poverty. You can find up-to-date information from the Child Poverty Action Group website or the End Child Poverty coalition website. You can also invite group members to research their own facts.

TASK:

Read out statements about poverty, based on the facts and figures that you have found. Ask group members to show whether they agree or disagree by raising their hands, or label one side of the room 'True' and the other 'False' and ask them to move to the side that reflects their answer

If people are participating virtually you can ask them to raise their hand if they believe the statement to be true, or keep their hands down if they believe it is false.

Ask people to share their thoughts and responses before you give the correct answer.

You can move from more factual questions towards more subjective and sensitive questions, depending on the mood in the room and how group members react. For example, 'how do you think you would feel if you were experiencing this?' Or, 'knowing this, how do you now feel?'

3 WHAT IS POVERTY?

30-60 mins

AIM: We all come to discussions of poverty with preconceptions about what it is. No matter how well-informed or not we are, messages in wider society will shape our views and thinking. This exercise allows group members to share ideas and challenge their own and other members' thinking on poverty.

You are not trying to come up with an understanding that everyone agrees on, but to examine the ways we think about poverty and the influences which affect us all.



IN PERSON:

- Pens or pencils
- Paper
- Post-it notes

ONLINE:



- Virtual post-it notes such as a Miro board
- Or ask everyone to have their own pen and paper, and to be ready to hold up any illustrations etc.

TASK:

Everyone spends a few minutes on their own, writing or drawing any words, phrases, or images that come into their mind when they hear the word 'poverty' or the phrase 'child poverty'. These might be their personal views, or messages which they are aware of, whether or not they agree with them.

Ask group members to stick their work up on the walls or on a large sheet of paper. Or if working online, to contribute to the Miro board.

Give everyone the chance to talk about what they have written or drawn and to look at what other people have done. Encourage the group to look for similarities and differences between the ideas about poverty. Consider together how the messages we hear around us about poverty might impact people living in poverty.

4 'A DAY IN THE LIFE...'

30 - 60
mins

AIM: To allow group members to reflect in depth on what life in poverty is like, for themselves and/or for others, by exploring in detail what a 'normal day' in poverty is like – and what the world could look like if no-one lived in poverty.

This will help group members consider what changes are needed at different levels to help eradicate poverty and, in the meantime, to minimise the impact of poverty on children, young people and families.

RESOURCES

IN PERSON:

- Pens or pencils
- Paper
- Post-it notes

ONLINE:

- Someone to take notes, either with a pen and paper or via Word

TASK:

Divide the main group into small groups and ask the group members to make two 'Day Plans':

- One for a perfect day in the life of a child, young person, or parent,
- And one for a day in the life of a child, young person, or parent who is experiencing poverty.

They can interpret this however they like.

Ask them to think through each part of the day, and draw or write this out on a timeline, including as much detail as possible about what is happening, why, and how it affects whether the day is a good one or not. They need to identify the points in the day when poverty has a significant impact on someone's life.

When they have finished, ask each small group to talk the whole group through both of their day plans.

If working in person ask the small groups to swap their plans with each other and to use post-it notes to suggest what could happen differently in the day of the person experiencing poverty (for example, 'better pay', 'free school uniform', 'more job opportunities for young people', and so on). Encourage the groups to be creative. There are no wrong answers, and suggestions do not have to be realistic!

If working online ask each group to look again at their own plan and make suggestions for how things could happen differently.

Finally, ask each group to talk through their suggestions to the whole group. Start with a completely open mind, and then discuss whether and how their suggestions might be possible.

5

DEBRIEF

15 mins

This should take about 15 minutes. For more details about how to run this activity, see Meeting one.



You can get in touch with the coalition by emailing the Coordinator Rachel Walters at rachel@endchildpoverty.org.uk

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