



# Inspiring practice

Resources, tools and activities for human rights education



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

## **Inspiring practice**

Resources, tools and activities for human rights education

This manual has been published **online only**

October 2008

ISBN 1 903681 76 6

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The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is an independent, statutory body set up in 1999 as a result of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Its role is to promote awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland, to review existing law and practice and to advise government on what steps need to be taken to fully protect human rights in Northern Ireland. It has the power to conduct investigations, to assist individuals in court proceedings and to bring court proceedings itself.

 [www.nihrc.org](http://www.nihrc.org)



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## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

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This manual contains three parts:








**Part 1** contains background information on how to be a good human rights educator

**Part 2** contains resources, methods and tools to help facilitate a human rights workshop, and

**Part 3** contains sample activities for groups to explore human rights issues.

If you wish to learn more about a subject, click on the links throughout the manual.

### Guide to symbols

	Link to <b>another page</b> in this manual
	Link to <b>external websites</b> for more information
	Quick link to <b>pdf</b> download of a useful resource
	Indicates some <b>points to make</b> during group discussions
	Indicates a <b>tip</b> , a useful hint that will help you facilitate more effectively
	Indicates the <b>source</b> of the material
	Link back to the <b>contents</b> page

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# PART 1: PLANNING





## Introduction

Imagine a society in which each person is respected, where people can live in peace and with dignity.


Human rights education and training aims to help achieve these goals. Awareness of rights can begin where we are, in all the organisations and institutions that make up society, including, for example:

- schools or colleges
- the workplace
- trade unions
- government and statutory bodies
- businesses
- faith groups
- groups that support community development, and
- groups that provide services.

*Inspiring practice* has been designed to help people deliver workshops on human rights. It includes:

- information about human rights education
- sample activities, with clear instructions for facilitators
- easy to photocopy resource sheets to make preparation easier
- background information for facilitators
- links to key human rights conventions and legislation, and
- references and links to further resources and reading.

This manual will help facilitators introduce ideas about human rights, and stimulate debate and further learning. We hope that it encourages participants to take action to protect and promote human rights.

Some of the materials in this manual were developed for our consultation process about a  [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland](#) in 2000. They have been revised and updated in this new format.

Thanks to Rebecca Dudley, NIHRC Education Worker, for preparing this training resource, adapting materials from other sources and developing new ideas. Thanks also to Charlene Craig, for her design and layout.

Given the development of some training materials over time and in a variety of publications, it is sometimes hard to trace original authorship and copyright holders. Nonetheless, every effort has been made to seek permission and acknowledge ownership of copyright.


*"To educate is to believe in change."*

Paulo Freire, Brazilian Educator and social activist





If readers are aware of any other authors or copyright holders who should be acknowledged, we would be grateful to know so that revisions can be made in future.


We welcome your  [feedback](#) and are happy to receive comments and suggestions for improving this resource.

**Monica McWilliams**  
Chief Commissioner, NIHRC

October 2008



### **Useful tip**

Everywhere you see [blue text](#) it links to a related page in this manual or when accompanied with this symbol  to an external website. If you are offline and reading a printed copy, there is a list of useful websites in [Part 2](#).






## Human rights education

*"One of the ultimate goals of human rights education is the creation of a genuine human rights culture... Students must learn to evaluate real-life experience in human rights terms, starting with their own behaviour and the immediate community in which they live. They need to make an honest assessment about how the reality they experience every day conforms to human rights principles and then to take active responsibility for improving their community."*

ABC: Teaching Human Rights, Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools UN, Geneva, p96, 2004.

### Building a 'culture of human rights'

According to the  United Nations, human rights education aims to build:

*"... a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes directed to:*

- a. the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*
- b. the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity*
- c. the promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples' and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups*
- d. the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by a rule of law*
- e. the building and maintenance of peace, and*
- f. the promotion of people centred sustainable development and social justice."*

 **Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education, First Phase**  
UN, Geneva, p12, 2006.

These United Nations aims guide the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in all of its educational and training work.







*"Rights mean nothing unless people know about them. Justice means nothing unless it is understood."*

Kate Allen, Director of  
Amnesty International UK


## Education about human rights and for human rights

Human rights education is much more than passing on information. This type of education is about putting the basic underlying principles of human rights to work - fairness, respect for human dignity and difference, tolerance, and equality. This means that educators have to demonstrate a personal commitment to human rights

values through their training methods. They must be able to present workshops that go beyond content, and help participants to put the ideas into practice.

For this, human rights education needs a three-dimensional approach:

- 1) Education **about** human rights: information and understanding about types of rights, the history of rights, international legal instruments, and how democracy functions.
- 2) Education **for** human rights: personal, interactive and problem solving skills like self-knowledge and self-awareness, assessing and understanding your own motives with regard to others, realising your own prejudices; listening, resisting group pressures, expressing opinions; locating information, making decisions, using judgement and conflict resolution.
- 3) Education **through** human rights: creating an environment where the structures, methods and relationships operating in the teaching and learning situation reflect the values of human rights and its learning objectives; democratic working methods that demonstrate mutual respect between the leader and group members, and among the members of the group for each other.

 This section has been adapted from [European Convention on Human Rights: Starting Points for Teachers](#) COE, Strasbourg, 2004. © Council of Europe





## Demonstrating values

Participants in the sessions you run will watch closely to see whether what you do matches up to the values you are talking about. If you talk about participation and respect but do not allow anyone else to contribute, the message will not go far. Participants are likely to learn at least as much from what you *do* as a leader as from what you *say*. For example, providing positive leadership to welcome diversity and difference, especially if it becomes uncomfortable, is more valuable than *talking* about welcoming diversity and difference.

*"A culture of rights requires certain personal skills, attitudes and knowledge that begin with oneself. These include openness, dialogue, self-criticism, listening (not selective listening of course), honesty with oneself, exuding attitudes that neither discriminate, undermine, nor dictate, and no pretence."*

Sarah Motha, Human Rights Educator,  
South Africa

Good human rights educators come from lots of backgrounds, professional disciplines and experiences. However, they share much in common in the attitudes they bring to the task too.

For example, a good human rights educator will:

- respect participants and their starting points
- manage material so that it is ordered and well presented, and give instructions clearly
- ask lots of questions
- listen attentively
- practice participation as a way of life, because everyone has something important to contribute to the learning of the group
- encourage the expression of difference because it can stimulate new insights and ways of solving problems
- maintain the highest standard of accurate, up-to-date and reliable information
- continue to learn
- reflect on what works and adapt approaches
- be realistic about goals - a shorter time with the group means an educator will scale down the expectations they have of influencing knowledge, skills or attitudes of the learners, and
- stimulate the imagination through creative approaches because inspiring people is a crucial factor to motivate change.





## **Designing and delivering a successful workshop**

As a trainer, you can anticipate and influence most issues that make for a successful event. There are a few things that are outside of your control like bad traffic, extraordinary weather, power failures or bad news of any kind that can influence the mood of the group before you start.

You can help to minimise the impact of even these events. Never be late to a session you are running; always allow for bad traffic in your own travel arrangements, even if others don't. Consider in advance, how you would present the session if the equipment breaks down.

You can also increase the chances for a successful event by taking the following practical steps:

### **Choose a comfortable and accessible venue**

Common sense tells us that we need to be careful in choosing a venue and an appropriate time for any training we undertake. In addition, there are some environmental considerations which trainers should keep in mind. For example, when the room is too hot or too cold, too dark or too bright, or the furniture is uncomfortable, the participants become preoccupied with their own discomfort and lose interest in the presentation.

The arrangement of the room is another important factor in a successful session. The way the chair and tables are situated can help promote success. U-shaped or semi-circular seating helps establish a comfortable learning environment conducive to sharing and interacting. It is important to see the room before you start the workshop, to plan how you will handle the group work and interaction with the participants.

### **Think ahead about your needs for supplies or equipment**

Arrange for chalkboards, flipcharts, audio-visual equipment or other essential supplies. On the day of the session, facilitators should check equipment to ensure that equipment is in proper operating condition and that they understand how to operate it. The key points of the session should be listed on flipcharts, PowerPoint or poster paper ahead of time. All of this can save valuable time and make the workshop better organised.

### **Take steps to support access for everyone**

As you plan the event, consider the accessibility of the venue, for example for people with disabilities. Pay attention to physical obstacles and make sure that the venue is well signed and there is plenty of space in the meeting room itself for wheelchair users, or those with Guide Dogs, to move around easily.

Ask during the registration process whether there are specific needs for participants. This allows the opportunity to prepare large print materials





in advance, for example. Sign language and other interpreters need to be booked some weeks in advance.

Consider other access issues that may be relevant to people you are trying to reach. For example, providing childcare or childcare vouchers can make it easier for parents with primary responsibility for young children to attend an event. Be prepared to arrange evening or weekend workshops if this supports access for participants.

During the workshop itself, be aware of issues that can affect the participation of the whole group. This may be related to a physical disability or learning disability, but there are many other issues that can affect participation. For example, some members of the group may be speaking and listening to the proceedings in what is their second or third language. In addition, there are many adults, for whom English is a first language, who may not be confident readers.

Here are some ways you can assist everyone's participation:

- speak clearly and distinctly and use a microphone when necessary
- do not turn away from the group while you are speaking
- repeat all questions and comments from the participants so that everyone hears
- use high contrast markers on a flipchart
- ask speakers to identify themselves before they speak (including group members in discussion) to assist members of the group with visual impairments
- read or describe what is on a slide or handout for those with visual or learning disabilities, or literacy issues; make eye contact and direct comments to the people with disabilities rather than to companions or interpreters
- do not single out people to read to the group - ask for a volunteer
- allow ample time for people to speak and ask questions or make comments, even if there is some silence
- listen carefully, especially to people who find it more difficult to speak in the large group for any reason
- if you are not sure how to support someone's participation, find a discrete moment and ask - don't assume you know, and
- try to create an open environment for suggestions and keep learning all the time.

More information is available from the [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](#) and, in particular, their publication [Organising Accessible Events](#) (2004), jointly published with the former Disability Rights Commission.





## Keep to time

Keeping to the task you set out and keeping within the time agreed by the group is mainly the facilitator's job. Think ahead about how you are going to achieve this. You can enlist the help of members of the group too; everyone wants the session to end on time. For example:

- make sure that participants know you will start on time, and keep to that promise
- ask for a commitment to timekeeping in the group contract, for people to come back from breaks on time
- warn people at the outset that you will try to keep a balance between allowing time for all ideas to be shared, and achieving the goals of the group
- tell people in advance that sometimes you might have to close a discussion in order to meet the wider goals of the session
- judge how long each activity will take - add more time for larger group discussions, keeping yourself to time
- anticipate what the most important parts of the session are if you have to trim
- always allow time to summarise key learning and for the group to reflect on next steps, and
- try to end the session with 10-15 minutes to spare, for wrapping up, final comments, evaluation, etc.

## Anticipate controversial issues

Human rights topics present and call for discussion of controversial subjects. The discussion of controversial issues not only excites participants, but also focuses on decision-making, social participation and conflict management. As facilitators we are sometimes reluctant to introduce controversy, fearing that participants will be unable to discuss emotionally-charged subjects or ambiguous issues rationally. Nevertheless, reasoned debate and controversy raises participant interest and helps people focus and clarify their thinking.

Controversy should not be avoided; it can be an opportunity for dialogue and learning. However, it is your role to help create a safe environment in which the process can be managed. A [group contract](#) is an important tool for that purpose, as is your practical commitment to dignity, equality, fair treatment and diversity.

The following suggestions can help make controversy constructive and useful:

- encourage participants to examine and present conflicting views - be sure all sides of an issue are equally explored; it is incumbent upon the facilitator to raise any opposing views that may have been missed, though the facilitator should never argue with participants
- help participants identify specific points of agreement and disagreement,





places where compromise might be possible and places where compromise is unlikely to occur

- keep the participants focused on ideas or positions, rather than people, and
- stress that on many controversial topics, reasonable people will differ.

If there is time, you can also explore the consequences of any alternatives suggested. Conclude the activities or discussions, summarising all of the arguments presented.



### **Useful tip**

If there is a great deal of emotion in the room, it may be helpful to acknowledge the emotions; of course at times controversy is painful. Sometimes it helps simply to acknowledge that a conflict is beyond the scope of the workshop to resolve.

## **Take time to prepare well**

This manual offers some tools and ideas but a good trainer, educator or facilitator will take time to make the tools and ideas his or her own, to feel confident with the information and concepts that will be presented, and to think about how to adapt an idea for the group with whom s/he is working.

As a general rule, the first time you deliver material, count on at least three to five hours of preparation time for every hour of time spent in front of the group. After you have delivered a workshop for the first time, this can be reduced, but not eliminated.

## **Start with what you know about your group**

The more a facilitator knows about participants, the better. Identify the motivations, needs and interests of the participants. Motivations for attending a workshop will be very different from person to person.

If you are providing the training for another organisation try to find out from the organiser:

- who the participants are and what are their starting points
- what their knowledge will be and assumptions about human rights
- what their specific areas of interest in human rights are, and
- any specific needs or access requirements, for example, large print handouts for visually impaired, interpreter needs or venue with wheelchair access?





## **Identify your objectives**

Write a clear, concise statement of outcomes you want to achieve with regard to knowledge, skills and/or attitudes.

## **Consider how you will achieve these objectives**

Look at the activities suggested in [Part 3](#) of this manual to see whether there is an appropriate activity for your group. These activities are introductions to human rights; use them with the materials provided in the [Resources](#) section.

Read through these activities and make them your own. Use them as a good cook would use a recipe book; adapt the approaches to fit the needs of the group you will be working with.

When you have the ideas for the core activities you wish to do, design the whole workshop.

There are important tasks to do at each stage of the workshop for the group to be clear and feel that it is accomplishing the goals of the session.

If you are doing the session for the first time, it might be helpful to write a 'script' to prompt yourself with the key headings and points to make. Use the activity ideas to write your notes:

## **Create a welcoming environment**

When people arrive, the workshop should be clearly signed for newcomers and the room should be set out as required for the session.

Half-an-hour before the session begins, the facilitator should be relaxed and ready to focus on the participants as they arrive - equipment ready, photocopying done. It is in your interest to get to know the participants before the session starts; establishing a cordial and positive atmosphere helps effective learning and will make the experience more enjoyable for everyone, including you.

Providing refreshments can set the tone for your workshop and send a positive non-verbal message to participants.

## **Lead the group in introductions**

Introduce yourself and your organisation. Make brief and relevant points about why you are interested in the topic or what has prompted the workshop.

Invite the participants to introduce themselves briefly (this is important: see [Activity 1](#) in Part 3). They can also give their work role and one piece of constructive information related to your topic that day.






## Agree a group contract

Introduce a group contract, the principles by which the group will work together. Don't skip this bit. It can be a very helpful preventive tool to deal with conflicts. If you are only meeting for two hours, you can streamline this section. Have a sample contract prepared, a PowerPoint slide, for example.

Don't spend too much time on this, but do return to it if conflict arises in the group and, if necessary, remind people about how they agreed to work together. A group contract for a short session with a group that has never met before could contain, for example:

- what is said in the group, stays in the group (this is known as  [the Chatham House Rule](#))
- exercise respect for each other
- listen and encourage the participation of all
- turn off mobile phones
- respect for timekeeping - starting and finishing on time
- value differences, and
- any other ideas?

If the group is meeting for a longer period, you may wish to generate ideas for the contract from scratch, in proportion to how long the group will be working together and how contentious the issues may be within the group.

Use the contract to encourage everyone to participate. Ask participants to make sure that they can be seen and heard by everyone in the group when they speak.







## Clarify goals and objectives

Introduce the goals of the session and how you intend to achieve them with rough timings. Link the goals with what group members have already said if you can. Be clear about what you can achieve and what expectations you cannot meet (perhaps because time won't allow or that it is covered on another course).

Ensure that the agenda includes adequate breaks that allow time for participants to visit the toilet, make phone calls, smoke, etc. Tell participants when there will be breaks.

## Lead the learning activities

The activities in [Part 3](#) will help to plan this element. Some educators find it helpful to focus these activities as a 'STAR' (stimulate, transfer, apply, review). This is usually an interactive exercise, one of the tools referred to later in this resource.

Try to make sure the training does not drag or become predictable. Aim for some elements that are surprising and inspiring. Vary the pace and the methods of learning, moving from exercises in which everyone takes part, to exposition, to visuals or music, for example.

Think carefully about how you will draw each learning activity to a close and the key points you might wish to reinforce or emphasise. It is important after a wide-ranging discussion to draw the group back to main learning points that relate back to the goals and objectives of the session.

## Summarise key points

You have several important tasks at the end of the activity session. For example, you should:

- acknowledge points which the group hasn't agreed, especially if there has been conflict
- acknowledge what next steps you are planning to take, especially if you need to find out more information and follow up
- explain how the participants can get more information, and
- summarise with the group how the session has addressed the goals you set at the beginning, and the key points.

**S**timulate interest: why it matters, or starting in a real life situation that matters.

**T**ransfer relevant information: consider what knowledge is relevant and how to communicate it. This is often a short explanation with a handout.

**A**pply the information or knowledge: consider case studies where principles can be explored and discussed.

**R**eview or reinforce the learning: go back over the key points that have emerged out of the group exercises, and the key points you want to leave with the group addressed.





## **Invite reflection and feedback**

Encourage reflection on how the material can be useful in each participant's work or community setting and encourage sharing on this point.

Take time for evaluation. This can take two forms. You can, for example, invite comment on how well the session met the goals of the participants. Or, you can ask for written feedback in the form of an evaluation form. Thank everyone for their participation.

It is very helpful to stay for a few minutes after the session is over, to hear about peoples' feelings and thoughts about the material and the issues it raises for them. Listening to participants' responses can help the trainer assess whether the goals have been met and whether the training design is appropriate, and it might be an opportunity to provide more information, if requested. Finally, after the meeting, keep any promises to follow up.



### **Useful Tip**

Good follow-up cements a positive impression of competence and professionalism; poor follow-up can create unnecessary negative views about both you and your organisation.





## Checklist for a successful event - example

<b>Planning the workshop</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Objectives of workshop identified	
Incentives and requirements for participants identified	
Facilitators identified	
Announcement/publicity/invitations disseminated	
Realistic timeframe planned	
Appropriate workshop venue assessed and booked	
Agenda and activities planned	
Evaluation forms prepared	
<b>Participant information</b>	
Number of people in the workshop	
Background of participants (job, experience, human rights knowlege)	
Access or dietary requirements	
Time and date of workshop suitable	
Transportation to/from airport or train station?	
Directions to venue	
Hotel accommodation (if any)	
<b>Workshop logistics</b>	
Adequate size of room	
Check for visual obstructions	
Plan seating arrangements for interaction	
Check noise level, heating adjustment, air conditioning	
Equipment needs – sound system, audio-visual	
Convenient rest-rooms	
Refreshments and meals	
<b>Handouts</b>	
Relevant information on handout: check if large print is required	
Materials for workshop activities	
Sufficient copies for participants and spares	
Evaluation forms	
<b>Materials/equipment</b>	
PA system	
Laptop, projector, screen	





Flipcharts and easel	
Markers or chalk	
Notebooks and folders	
Pens and pencils	
Masking tape, Blu Tack	
Scissors	
Extra paper	
Paper clips	
<b>Workshop scheduling</b>	
Registration	
Introductory activities	
Adequate short breaks	
Adequate lunch time	
List all room locations	
Evaluation time	
<b>Day before the workshop</b>	
Confirm time and location with facilitators	
Prepare registration forms and name tags	
Set up PowerPoint equipment if possible, in case of difficulties	
Collate notes, handouts, paper	
Registration pens and pencils	
Room arrangements and meals confirmed	
<b>Day of workshop</b>	
Special guests/facilitators greeted/seated	
Check room temperature	
Sound system and any other equipment (e.g. PowerPoint) working	
Refreshments (e.g. tea, coffee, water) set up	
Pack up and check all equipment to make sure all pieces are stored safely	
<b>Follow-up</b>	
Write thank you letters to all facilitators/others	
If you promised any participants additional information, send it promptly	
Collate evaluations and reflect on what went well and could be improved for delivering the course again	





# PART 2: RESOURCES





## Methods and tools for educators

There are some basic methods and tools that every educator should be able to use to involve the group in learning. Use these techniques to add a new dimension to workshops on any subject to get people moving, talking, thinking and questioning.

Some of these tools – asking questions, continuums, small group discussions, role play – are featured in the activities in [Part 3](#).

Other methods and tools can build and improve sessions about human rights to meet the needs of your organisation – for example, snowballing and blue skies thinking. Finally, there are a few ideas to add to a session to make it really memorable and inspiring.

## Asking questions

The technique of questioning is critical to the success of the sessions. Questions should call for thoughtful responses and stimulate dialogue among participants rather than promoting exchanges between the facilitator and participants. Everyone should be encouraged to explore alternative solutions as they attempt to solve problems posed in the exercises. You will want to use questions that therefore lead participants to analyse situations and synthesise concepts so that they can build on their knowledge and apply information to their daily lives.

### How to ask questions

- Don't just ask participants to recall information. Have them use information to resolve dilemmas posed in the exercises.
- Challenge participants to formulate judgments about laws or public policies. Always probe for reasons.
- Have participants generate options when confronted with a conflict and analyse the options to decide which is the best course of action.
- In general, ask questions to ensure that people understand the material but also ask questions that require participants to analyse, apply and evaluate information.
- Pause at least five seconds after asking a question to allow people time to think.
- Call on more than one person per question, especially if a few people are dominating. Invite responses from people who haven't yet spoken in the larger group (this avoids putting individuals on the spot).
- Pose a question and have people discuss answers with a partner.
- Ask participants to generate their own questions regarding material just discussed.
- Ask participants to signal by showing thumbs up (at chest level), if they agree with a statement; thumbs down, if they disagree; and thumbs to the side, if they're not sure.





- Encourage participants to expand on their responses if they provide short or fragmentary answers.
- Encourage people to react to each other's responses.
- Avoid imposing your own judgment on participant responses to open questions. 'Open' implies that a wide variety of responses may be acceptable.
- Silence is ok. Be patient, some people need more time.
- Ask follow-up questions that call for clarification, elaboration, reasons based on evidence, etc.



### **Some points to make**

Put people at ease with their own questions or doubts by suggesting that sometimes the issues are very difficult and pose wider problems that societies have been addressing for a long time. If they were easy, they would have been sorted long ago.

## **Continuums**

This activity invites the participants to stand along the side of the room in a continuum of opinions on a controversial issue. The issues should have legitimate opposing viewpoints, such as whether more police at the local level is a good way to prevent crime. Discussions about controversial issues help people consider polar positions. Examine alternative positions and their consequences on society and on individuals, defend a position, and practice listening to other opinions.

### **How to do Continuums**

- The facilitator prepares posters labelled 'Agree' or 'Disagree' on them and place them prominently on either side of the room. Ask for help in clearing the furniture to leave the room clear (this adds drama and interest).
- Describe the polar positions and ensure these are clearly understood.
- Ask the group members to stand at the position on the continuum where they believe their opinion falls.
- Participants can be asked to give reasons for their positions. They should be encouraged to move their position along the continuum as they listen to others clarify their positions.
- Participants can respond to questions concerning their reasons, but arguments should not be allowed.
- In order to ensure that participants listen to, and consider, opposing points of view, participants can be asked to present the arguments that, although contrary to their positions, make them think twice, 'get under their skin', or are the most persuasive.
- Finally, participants should be required to consider the consequences





of alternative policy choices. This step involves identifying the existing law or policy on the issue being considered, if it exists. The group can then discuss what impact the polar positions presented on the continuum would have on society as a whole and on individuals.

## Small group work

Small group activities enable participants to learn co-operation skills and other important interpersonal skills. These activities can also help participants learn to resolve differences among themselves.

### How to do small group work

Think of a surprising way to divide into a group: energy levels will rise if you introduce a little surprise here. For example:

- sort out a few cards from a deck of playing cards or the children's deck of *Happy Families*. Distribute one card to each group member and invite them to find their matching family members or suits
- sort out a few types of sweets from a box of chocolates and distribute among participants - ask all the people with, for example, red toffees to group together
- cut up postcards into three or four pieces and have participants find their match, or
- ask group members to raise their hands if their birthdays are between January and March, April and June, etc.

The ideal size for small groups is three to five people. The shorter the time available, the smaller the group should be. The larger the group, the more skilful the participants must be in giving everyone an opportunity to speak.

Visit each small group to see how they are doing and to answer questions. Make sure they have enough time for the task you set them, or make sure they know that *working* on the task is more important than *finishing* it!

Small group assignments can include a facilitator, recorder, reporter, questioner and a summariser. The tasks must be carefully explained and the directions should be displayed on a chalkboard or flipchart for all to see.

Some facilitators keep smaller groups together for an entire workshop. It is helpful to allow groups to remain stable long enough for them to be successful. This decision should be based on how well the facilitator feels each group is working.

Remind the groups that the terms of the whole group contract also apply when working in small groups.







### Useful tips for group work

- Ensure participants have the knowledge and skills necessary to do the work (if they don't, you'll know; they won't stick to the task).
- Give clear instructions. It is unlikely that the group will be able to follow more than one or two instructions at a time (even clear ones!).
- Allow enough time to complete the assigned task in the small group. Think creatively about ways to occupy groups that finish ahead of other groups. Allow enough time at the end to debrief small groups.
- Be prepared for the increased noise level that occurs during small group activities. This may be an issue especially for people with hearing impairments; consider how the layout of the room can minimise this.
- Remember differences are a good thing in groups. But if you suspect the groups are too familiar, don't isolate and embarrass people to engineer more lively debate. Instead, invite people to balance themselves out. For example, instruct the group to 'try to have a balance of men and women in every group' or 'make sure that there is at least one person you have never met before', or similar.
- Circulate and observe/evaluate what is occurring in the groups. When you stop to visit a group, don't take it over. In fact, try not to say anything at all, except to clarify the task if necessary.
- Participants should sit in a circle or in a way that they can see each other easily.





## **Role play and simulation**

Role play is when participants feel like, think like, and/or act like another individual and act out a particular problem or situation.

Simulation is when participants react to a specific problem within a structured environment; for example, a moot court or parliamentary hearing. This hypothetical situation is designed to simulate a process or procedure.

Although these two approaches differ, they are complementary and share the purposes of:

- promoting the expression of attitudes, opinions and values
- fostering participant ability to develop and consider alternative courses of action, and
- developing empathy for others.

## **How to do role play and simulation**

There are four essential components to these two exercises:

1. Preliminary planning and preparation by the facilitator
2. Preparation and training of the participants
3. Active group involvement in conducting the activity
4. Careful discussion and reflection about the activity

These activities should be presented in a relaxed, non-threatening atmosphere. Participants should realise there may be more than one way to react. Participation will help participants feel more confident in these activities. There should be concluding and in-depth analysis of the experience by the group.

The following questions may be helpful during the concluding part of the session:

- Was the problem solved? Why? Why not? How was it solved?
- What alternative courses of action were available?
- Is this situation similar to anything that you have experienced?
- Are there any legal protections that could have made this situation fair(er) or more just?





### **Useful tips for role playing**

- Give participants adequate information to play roles convincingly. This preparation will make it easier and ensure they enjoy the exercise.
- Make situations and problems realistic, something people might actually confront.
- Allow participants to 'jump right in'. Don't spend time on long introductions.
- Allow participants to do a role-reversal to look at opposing viewpoints. This also prevents stereotyping participants.

## **Snowballing**

Snowballing enables participants to think about their own responses and gradually reach out to those around them to consider the thoughts of others on an issue.

### **How to do snowballing**

- The facilitator asks a question and/or poses a scenario and gives the participants a few moments to reflect.
- The facilitator asks the participants to turn to the person next to them and discuss their thoughts (in pairs). Depending on the activity, the facilitator may ask participants to prioritise their ideas, come to consensus on their top priorities, etc (allow several minutes).
- Then the facilitator asks each pair to turn to another pair and discuss their thoughts (allow several minutes).

## **Generating ideas: blue skies thinking**

Blue skies thinking is a well-known and widely used interactive method. It encourages participants to use their imaginations and be creative. It helps elicit numerous solutions to any given problem; for example, 'what should I do in this situation?' or 'how can we overcome this obstacle?'

No evaluation of any kind is allowed in a 'thinking-up' session. If you judge and evaluate ideas as they are expressed, people will focus more on defending their ideas than on thinking up new and better ones.

Everyone is encouraged to 'think-up' as many ideas as possible. 'Wild' or different ideas should be encouraged. If a range of ideas is not forthcoming in a brainstorming session, it may be because the participants are censoring their own ideas — thinking twice before presenting an idea to avoid coming up with a silly one and risking sounding foolish.





Quantity is encouraged – participants should build upon or modify the idea of others.

### **How to do blue skies thinking**

- Seat the participants informally.
- Provide a flipchart pad or blackboard for recording ideas.
- State the problem or issue to be addressed.
- State the ground rules; for example, no evaluation of ideas is allowed and no judgment as to worth.
- Free-wheeling thinking is encouraged, no idea is too crazy (although the facilitator will need to be sure that counter ideas are presented).
- The more ideas, the better; strive for quantity and build upon the ideas of others (combine, modify, etc.).
- Ask for ideas and record them as fast as they come – do not edit them.
- Encourage new ideas by adding your own.
- Discourage derisive laughter, comments or ridicule of any ideas.
- Discuss and evaluate the ideas generated.

### **Methods to stimulate imagination**

There are many tools and methods that can be used to stimulate the imagination of the group. These efforts can lift a training session from being 'good enough' to being fun, memorable and inspiring.

Use these tools to add drama and interest, reinforce points, energise people, tie in theory to practical realities, and encourage participants to want to learn more.

**Use something visual to demonstrate a point** – something beautiful, intriguing or interesting works best. Consider using literal or symbolic objects to reinforce a point; for example, if the session is about human rights and food, you could use different kinds of bread from different cultures. Ask participants why they think the bread is there and why you have brought it. Or, if you are talking about employment rights, you could bring an item that is fairly traded. Or, put a pile of potatoes in the centre of the room (see [Activity 17](#)) and let people wonder why they are there until later in the session when you explain their purpose.

**Use relevant news clips** or newspaper headlines that set the tone for a subject and show why it is topical. Use headlines from the same day of the training, from local papers if they are immediately relevant.

**Add images** to a PowerPoint presentation; pictures can be more memorable than words. However, keep these focused to reinforce points: too many images become distracting.





**Use a table quiz** – instead of just giving people information. People will be more interested after a quiz in a handout that has the answers.

**Use multi-media resources** – you can download human rights animations by award winning student artists from our [YouTube](#) page.

**Find appropriate music/lyrics** to set the tone for people when they are on breaks or coming back from breaks. Does the session you are planning remind you of a song? If it advances your learning aims for the group, use it in the session.

**Invite people to physically move around** (see activities like 'Where do you stand on Human Rights'). Move around yourself.

**Turn the room 'back to front'** – if you are concerned that people at the back of the room are less engaged, and if the layout of the room permits this, stand at the back for some of the presenting, so the room is turned back to front for a while.

## Using PowerPoint in presentations

PowerPoint presentations are widely used as a visual training aid. They work best if used with a combination of other methods to increase people's involvement in the learning process. A PowerPoint presentation can effortlessly turn something small into something big enough with a visual impact, to involve hundreds of people at one time. Done well, it can convey the message that you and your organisation are efficient, competent and up-to-date.

PowerPoint can be a flexible tool to assist learning. It can:

- provide a powerful visual stimulus for your presentation and can incorporate short video clips and images to reinforce key messages in new ways
- help participants follow the structure of the workshop
- save paper (for example, a question or questions for discussion can be projected rather than handed out), or
- be printed out for participants to write notes on, and
- it can be emailed afterwards as a reminder of the session.

However, PowerPoint presentations are no substitute for good facilitation by the trainer. They can be overused when other approaches may be more appropriate.





## How to use PowerPoint

Here are some pointers for preparing a good PowerPoint presentation:

### Keep it simple

- one slide equals at least two minutes talking time
- include a title slide (introducing who you are and what you will talk about) and an end slide (your contact details for further information)
- maximum six points per slide, six words per point
- use strong images and photographs
- show trends not data
- use animation sparingly, this can be very distracting, and
- avoid using sound effects unless they directly relate to a point.

### Keep it readable

- ensure the letters are big enough to read (recommended font size is 28 point)
- use easy-to-read fonts for example, Sans Serif fonts like Arial or Verdana, and
- be aware that not everyone may be able to read the slides, and be prepared to read what is on each slide.

### Keep it clear

- use high-contrast colours:
  - mid-tones do not show up well
  - avoid bright red, and
  - remember that colour-blind people find it hard to differentiate between red and green
- use colour or **bold** or *italic* for emphasis
- CAPITALS and underlined information are hard to read, and
- black font on white background can cause visual stress and glare with data projectors.

### Be consistent

- backgrounds, fonts, colours, transitions should be consistent throughout the presentation, and
- ensure your presentation adheres to the corporate style of your organisation and that spelling errors are omitted – this reinforces your branding and looks professional.





## Frequently asked questions about human rights

### Human rights is a big subject!

*'Human rights are like armour: they protect you; they are like rules, because they tell you how you can behave; and they are like judges, because you can appeal to them. They are abstract—like emotions, and like emotions, they belong to everyone and they exist no matter what happens. They are like nature because they can be violated; and like the spirit because they cannot be destroyed.*

*Like time, they treat us all the same way—rich and old, young and old, white and black, tall and short. They offer us respect, and they charge us to treat others with respect. Like goodness, truth and justice, we disagree about their definition, but we recognize them when we see them.'*

*Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People, 2002*

### What is meant by human rights?

Human rights are universal legal guarantees protecting individuals and groups against actions which interfere with fundamental freedoms and human dignity. Human rights law obliges governments to do some things and prevents them from doing others. Some of the most important characteristics of human rights are:

- they are internationally guaranteed
- they are legally protected
- they focus on the dignity of the human being
- they protect individuals and groups
- they obligate states and state actors
- they cannot be waived/taken away
- they are equal and interdependent, and
- they are universal.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are enumerated in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and various treaties (also called 'covenants' and 'conventions'), declarations, guidelines and bodies of principles laid out by the United Nations and by regional organisations.

### How does a rights-based approach differ from a needs-based approach?

When something is defined as a right, it means that someone holds a claim, or legal entitlement, and someone else holds a corresponding duty or legal obligation. With a rights-based approach, effective action moves from the optional realm of charity into the mandatory realm of law, with identifiable rights, obligations, claims holders and duty holders.





## Where do human rights rules come from?

Human rights rules and standards are derived from two principle types of international sources; namely, customary international law and treaty law.

Customary international law develops through the general and consistent practice of states, followed because of a sense of legal obligation.

Treaty law includes the law of human rights as set out in many international agreements developed, signed and ratified by states.

These agreements include:

 [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(1966\)](#)

 [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(1966\)](#)

All these instruments are legally binding on the states which are 'party' to them. There are other types of instruments: declarations; recommendations; bodies of principles; codes of conduct, etc. These are not legally binding on states, but have moral force and provide practical guidance to states in their conduct.

In human rights law, while it is individuals and groups which are protected, it is the conduct of states (and state actors) which is regulated. Organisations monitoring human rights include, among others, independent human rights commissions such as the NIHRC, community-based organisations, the courts, parliaments, the media, trade unions, religious organisations and academic institutions.

For more information read the  [UN Human Rights Training Manual](#).

## What about responsibilities?

A right is something you have without earning it or deserving it. It is yours simply because you are a human being. However, if it is a right for you, it is also a right for everyone else. If we believe that rights belong to everyone, acting consistently with that belief will mean that we look for opportunities to promote the rights of everyone.

As well as having rights, we need to be aware of the balance they require between the interests of each individual and the common good of society. We all have the responsibility to respect the rights of other people, so that the right to free speech, for example, does not include the right to incite hatred and violence. Only a few rights, such as the right to freedom from torture, are not limited. You can see this in the way that the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) is written (look closely at Articles 8 to 11, for example).







## Are human rights individualistic?

Human rights have been criticised for being individualistic and even selfish. In fact, relationships between individuals are affirmed at the outset of the modern age of human rights, starting with the preamble (Article 1) of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (1948). It says, in the language of the time, that human beings are “endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood”. There are several places where the duties of individuals are affirmed in international instruments, including Article 29 of the UDHR, which says, “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible”. This language is echoed in the preambles of both the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) (1966) and the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (1966). Note also, the purpose of the preamble to be concerned about the whole of society in the whole world; for example, “the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

## What do we mean by building a culture where rights are respected?

Human rights activists use the phrase ‘building a culture of rights’ for many of their activities, whether legislation, litigation, training, or awareness raising. The UK Parliament’s [Joint Committee on Human Rights](#) spent some time trying to explain what this might mean and, in particular, what it hoped might develop after the passing of the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) and its coming into force on 2 October 2000.

The Committee concluded that:

*“A culture of human rights ... would be one which gave full recognition to [a] positive concept of rights ... In such a culture ... respect for human rights should shape the goals, structures, and practices of our public bodies...”*

It added, however, that:

*“A culture of human rights is not one which is concerned only with rights, to the neglect of duties and responsibilities, but rather one that balances rights and responsibilities by fostering a basic respect for human rights and dignity, and creating a climate in which such respect becomes an integral part of our dealings with the public authorities of the state and with each other...”*

*Such a culture of respect for human rights could help create a more humane society, a more responsive government and better public services. It could help to deepen and widen democracy. It is a goal worth striving for.”*

 [The Case for a Human Rights Commission, The Sixth Report from the Joint Committee on Human Rights Session 2002-2003](#), TSO, London, 2003.





## International protection of human rights

In the late 1930s and 1940s, the world was shaken by many terrible events: the rise of fascism; the atrocities of concentration camps and the uprooting of millions of people from their homes during World War II; and the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The creation of the United Nations (UN) was intended to ensure that such events never took place again. The UN Charter, signed in San Francisco in June 1945, committed each member state in the new organisation to take action to promote “universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of race, sex, language or religion”. On 10 December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). This promised a “world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want” and that the fundamental rights of people would be protected by rule of law.

Until the end of World War II, how a government dealt with its citizens was largely seen as its own internal affair, not a matter for anyone outside its borders. With the adoption of the UDHR, for the first time, such matters became the legitimate concern of all states and their inhabitants.

The UDHR’s principles became binding in international law in 1966, when the UN agreed two important treaties: the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) and the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#). Many other international laws have followed:

- [Convention on the Status of Refugees 1951](#)
- [European Convention on Human Rights 1953](#)
- [African Charter of Human and People’s Rights 1981](#)
- [Convention Against Torture 1984](#), and
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#)

It is clear that the Declaration did not bring about a swift end to abuses of human rights around the world. Since 1948, millions of people have been slaughtered by their governments because of their origins, ideas or beliefs. Millions more have been jailed for their beliefs and ideas and for their struggles for justice and freedom. Tens of millions of refugees have fled from oppression. Poverty, sickness and hunger are everyday experiences for much of the world’s population. Each day of the week, every single one of the 30 Articles of the UDHR is being violated somewhere in the world.





## Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Summary

### **Article 1**

Right to equality

### **Article 2**

Freedom from discrimination

### **Article 3**

Right to life, liberty, personal security

### **Article 4**

Freedom from slavery

### **Article 5**

Freedom from torture and degrading treatment

### **Article 6**

Right to recognition as a person before the law

### **Article 7**

Right to equality before the law

### **Article 8**

Right to remedy by competent tribunal

### **Article 9**

Freedom from arbitrary arrest and exile

### **Article 10**

Right to fair public hearing

### **Article 11**

Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty

### **Article 12**

Freedom from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence

### **Article 13**

Right to free movement in and out of the country

### **Article 14**

Right to asylum in other countries from persecution

### **Article 15**

Right to a nationality and the freedom to change it

### **Article 16**

Right to marriage and family

### **Article 17**

Right to own property

### **Article 18**

Freedom of belief and religion

### **Article 19**

Freedom of opinion and information

### **Article 20**

Right of peaceful assembly and association

### **Article 21**

Right to participate in government and in free elections

### **Article 22**

Right to social security

### **Article 23**

Right to desirable work and to join trade unions

### **Article 24**

Right to rest and leisure

### **Article 25**

Right to adequate living standard

### **Article 26**

Right to education

### **Article 27**

Right to participate in the cultural life of community

### **Article 28**

Right to a social order that articulates this document

### **Article 29**

Community duties essential to free and full development

### **Article 30**

Freedom from state or personal interference in the above rights

Download the  [full text](#) of the UDHR.





## European Convention on Human Rights - Summary

### Summary of the preamble

The member governments of the Council of Europe work towards peace and greater unity based on human rights and fundamental freedoms. With this Convention they decide to take the first steps to enforce many of the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Article 1** - Obligation to respect human rights

States must ensure that everyone has the rights stated in this Convention.

### **Article 2** - Right to life

You have the right to life.

### **Article 3** - Prohibition of torture

No one ever has the right to hurt you or torture you. Even in detention your human dignity has to be respected.

### **Article 4** - Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

It is prohibited to treat you as a slave or to impose forced labour on you.

### **Article 5** - Right to liberty and security

You have the right to liberty. If you are arrested you have the right to know why. If you are arrested you have the right to stand trial soon, or to be released until the trial takes place.

### **Article 6** - Right to a fair trial

You have the right to a fair trial before an unbiased and independent judge. If you are accused of having committed a crime, you are innocent until proved guilty. You have the right to be assisted by a lawyer who has to be paid by the state if you are poor.

### **Article 7** - No punishment without law

You cannot be held guilty of a crime if there was no law against it when you did it.

### **Article 8** - Right to respect for private and family life

You have the right to respect for your private and family life, your home and correspondence.

### **Article 9** - Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

You have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. You have the right to practise your religion at home and in public and to change your religion if you want.

### **Article 10** - Freedom of expression

You have the right to responsibly say and write what you think and to give and receive information from others. This includes freedom of the press.

### **Article 11** - Freedom of assembly and association

You have the right to take part in peaceful meetings and to set up or join associations - including trade unions.

### **Article 12** - Right to marry

You have the right to marry and to have a family.

### **Article 13** - Right to an effective remedy

If your rights are violated, you can complain about this officially to the courts or other public bodies.

### **Article 14** - Prohibition of discrimination

You have these rights regardless of your skin colour, sex, language, political or religious beliefs, or origins.





**Article 15** - Derogation in time of emergency

In time of war or other public emergency, a government may do things which go against your rights, but only when strictly necessary. Even then, governments are not allowed, for example, to torture you or to kill you arbitrarily.

**Article 16** - Restrictions on political activity of aliens

Governments may restrict the political activity of foreigners, even if this would be in conflict with Articles 10, 11 or 14.

**Article 17** - Prohibition of abuse of rights

Nothing in this Convention can be used to damage the rights and freedoms in the Convention.

**Article 18** - Limitation on use of restriction of rights

Most of the rights in this Convention can be restricted by a general law which is applied to everyone. Such restrictions are only allowed if they are strictly necessary.

**Articles 19 - 51**

These articles explain how the European Court of Human Rights works.

**Article 34** - Individual applications

If your rights contained in the Convention have been violated in one of the member states you should first appeal to all competent national authorities. If that does not work out for you, then you may appeal directly to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

**Article 52** - Inquiries by the Secretary General

If the Secretary General of the Council of Europe requests it, a government must explain how its national law protects the rights of this Convention.

**Article 1 of Protocol No. 1** - Protection of property

You have the right to own property and use your possessions.

**Article 2 of Protocol No. 1** - Right to education

You have the right to go to school.

**Article 3 of Protocol No. 1** - Right to free elections

You have the right to elect the government of your country by secret vote.

**Article 2 of Protocol No. 4** - Freedom of movement

If you are lawfully within a country, you have the right to go where you want and to live where you want within it.

**Article 1 of Protocol No. 6** - Abolition of the death penalty

You cannot be condemned to death or executed by the state.

**Article 2 of Protocol No. 7** - Right of appeal in criminal matters

You may appeal to a higher court if you have been convicted for committing a crime.

**Article 3 of Protocol No. 7** - Compensation for wrongful conviction

You have the right to compensation if you have been convicted for committing a crime and it turns out that you were innocent.

**Article 1 of Protocol No. 12** - General prohibition of discrimination


You cannot be discriminated against by public authorities for reasons of, for example, your skin colour, sex, language, political or religious beliefs, or origins. [Please note: at the time of printing, this protocol is not yet in force]

 This summary is from [The European Convention on Human Rights: Starting Points for Teachers](#) by Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2004. © Council of Europe





## UK Human Rights Act 1998 - Summary

The  [Human Rights Act 1998](#) (HRA), which entered into force on 2 October 2000, is based on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). It can be summarised as follows:

**Article 2:** Every person's life shall be protected by law.

**Article 3:** No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

**Article 4:** No one shall be subjected to slavery or forced labour.

**Article 5:** Everyone shall have the right to liberty and security of person.

**Article 6:** Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing when facing a criminal charge or where their civil rights are at stake.

**Article 7:** No one shall be subject to a retrospective criminal offence or penalty.

**Article 8:** Everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life, their home and correspondence.

**Article 9:** Everyone has the freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

**Article 10:** Everyone has the right to freedom of expression.

**Article 11:** Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, to form and to join trade unions and to associate with others.

**Article 12:** Everyone has the right to marry and to found a family.

**Article 13:** The right to an effective remedy (not part of UK Human Rights Act).

**Article 14:** The rights contained in the Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

### Protocol No 1

**Article 1:** Everyone is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his or her possessions. No one shall be deprived of his or her possessions without compensation.

**Article 2:** No person shall be denied the right to education.

**Article 3:** Everyone has the right to participate in free elections conducted with a secret ballot.

The Human Rights Act brings fundamental human rights into UK law. All new laws have to take the HRA into account and should not take away any of its rights and freedoms. Public authorities - local government, regional government, national government, and even the courts themselves have to make sure they comply with the Act. People in the UK used to have to go to the European Court of Human Rights, in Strasbourg, to protect human rights. From October 2000, it has been possible to take a case to the courts in Northern Ireland under the UK Human Rights Act 1998.





## Projects for action on human rights


People have taken many actions to promote human rights. Here are some ideas initiated by young people and adaptable for people of all ages:

- identify and research an issue of concern
- become a volunteer in a community or human rights organisation
- support community public events for human rights issues to raise money, spread awareness, show support and promote action by politicians or other decision-makers
- take part in public demonstrations
- write articles for, or publish, a magazine
- produce art work for exhibitions
- attend seminars and conferences to learn more about human rights, or
- stand for elected office.

The experience of people and organisations who successfully influence human rights is that they choose strategies that vary according to the issue and objectives, but they include:

- direct assistance to those who have been victims of human rights violations; humanitarian assistance, protection, or training to develop new skills
- collecting accurate information, to hold governments to account to keep their promises to uphold human rights (sometimes information gathering is linked to litigation that helps bring cases to court that challenge policies and practices of government)
- campaigning and lobbying to bring about policy changes, for example, through letter writing, street actions, work with the press, or private meetings with officials, and
- long-term education to bring greater knowledge of human rights issues to a wider and wider public - some of the activities in this manual can be used to that purpose.

What could you, or your group, do to provide direct assistance, collect accurate information, campaign and lobby, or promote long-term education about human rights issues? What should the first step be for change?

 Projects for action on human rights has been adapted from [Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) by P Brander *et al*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003. © Council of Europe





## Human rights glossary

**Absolute rights:** These rights may never be interfered with, not even in times of war or national emergency.

**Bill of Rights:** A document which is usually, but not necessarily, annexed to a written constitution, guaranteeing certain rights to all the people in that country, which is usually enforced by the courts.

**Civil and political rights:** Rights relating to participation in public life, such as right to a fair trial, freedom of speech, freedom from torture. Sometimes known as 'first generation' rights.

**Convention:** Rules of political practice which are traditionally regarded as binding by those to whom they apply, but which are not laws as they are not enforced by the courts. The main human rights treaties are referred to as 'Conventions'.

**Council of Europe:** A European political institution established in May 1949 by the leaders of 15 countries to build greater unity in Europe. It now has 46 members. The Council of Europe implements the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter (not to be confused with the European 'Social Chapter' of the European Union).

**Declaration of incompatibility:** A power granted by the Human Rights Act to Northern Ireland's High Court (and equivalent courts elsewhere in the UK) to read primary legislation (defined below) as inconsistent with the rights protected by the European Convention of Human Rights.

**Derogation:** Certain Conventions provide that a state can opt not to be bound by certain provisions in time of war or emergency. This is known as a 'derogation'.

**European Convention on Human Rights:** A document consisting of 66 Articles and 11 Protocols for the protection of citizens against violations by states.

**Hard law:** Law or legislation that creates binding obligations.

**Inalienable rights:** Rights which cannot be given up or taken away.

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:** A United Nations treaty based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, created in 1966 and entered into force on 23 March 1976. Nations that have signed this treaty are bound by it.







**International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:** A multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966, and in force from 3 January 1976.

**Limited rights:** These rights are not absolute. They may be limited in certain strictly defined circumstances.

**Negative rights:** Provisions in Bills of Rights which require someone not to do something. For example, the right to free expression is generally seen as a negative right as it requires the state not to censor people's expression.

**Non-derogable rights:** Certain rights which a Bill of Rights or human rights treaty will not allow to be suspended, even in a situation of war or emergency. The right to life and freedom from torture are normally non-derogable rights.

**Non-governmental organisations or NGOs:** Groups which are independent of government, are normally created by their members and work on an international, regional, or local basis to achieve a social goal. Human rights NGOs focus on publicising human rights concerns and finding better ways of protecting human rights.

**Positive rights:** Rights in a Bill of Rights which require someone to do something. For example, the right to health care is generally seen as a positive right as it requires the state to make funds available to provide health care.

**Qualified rights:** These rights are not absolute. They may be interfered with so long as the interference is (1) lawful, (2) for a legitimate purpose, (3) necessary, and (4) proportionate (see 'proportionality' above).

**Ratification:** The process undertaken by a state with regard to a treaty which indicates an intent to be bound by it.

**Social and economic rights:** Rights relating to social and economic conditions, such as health care, housing, work and food.

**Soft law:** Law that does not create technically binding obligations on a state, but which sets out standards which are supposed to influence and shape the conduct of a state.

**State parties:** The states or governments which are party to a convention or treaty.

**Treaty:** An agreement between at least two countries committing them to future action.





## Useful resources

**ABC: Teaching Human Rights, Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools** by United Nations, HR/PUB/DECADE/2003/1, New York and Geneva, 2003

 Quick link  <http://www.un.org>

**All Different All Equal** by Youth Directorate, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1995 © Council of Europe

 Quick link  <http://www.eycb.coe.int/edupack/default.htm>

**Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual** by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Belfast, 2000

 Quick link  <http://www.nihrc.org/>

**Bill of Rights Information Pack** by Committee on the Administration of Justice, Belfast, 2006

 <http://www.caj.org.uk/>

**Bill of Rights in Schools: A Resource for Post-primary Schools** by Northern Ireland Human rights Commission, Belfast, 2004

 Quick link  <http://www.nihrc.org/>

**Bill of Rights in Schools: A Resource for Post-primary Schools (Irish language version)** by Northern Ireland Human rights Commission, Belfast, 2008

 Quick link  <http://www.nihrc.org/>

**Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People** (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) by P Brander *et al*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003 © Council of Europe

 Quick link  <http://eycb.coe.int/compass/>

**Circular Brainstorm, Methodologies to Encourage an Active Classroom Environment**, compiled by Lesley McEvoy for Local and Global Citizenship module at School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, unpublished manuscript.

 <http://www.qub.ac.uk>





**Developing Rights: Teaching Rights and Responsibilities for Ages 11 to 14** by Oxfam, London, 1998

 Quick link  <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/>

**European Convention on Human Rights, Starting Points for Teachers** by Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2004

 Quick link  <http://www.coe.int>

**Freedom! Human Rights Education Pack** by C Adams, M Harrow, and D Jones, Amnesty International UK, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 2001

 <http://www.amnesty.org.uk>

**Have I the right? A Workshop Pack on the Human Rights Act for Young People** by Charter 88 (now incorporated into Unlock Democracy), London, 1998

 <http://www.unlockdemocracy.org>

**Human Rights for All (and Teacher's Manual to Accompany Human Rights for All)** by E O'Brien, E Greene, and D McQuoid-Mason, National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, West Publishing Company, New York, 1996

**Human Rights Here and Now: Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights** by Amnesty International and Human Rights Educators' Network and, USA, 1998

 <http://www.amnesty.org/>  <http://www.hrusa.org>

**In Our Own Words, a Companion Tool to *Safe and Secure* and *Claiming Our Rights*** prepared by Nancy Flowers, Sisterhood is Global Institute, Canada, 1999

 <http://www.sigi.org/>

**Lift Off: Introducing Human Rights Education Within the Primary Curriculum** by the LIFT OFF Initiative, Belfast and Dublin, 2003

 Quick link  <http://www.liftoffschools.com/>

**Organising Accessible Events: Making your Conferences, Events and Exhibitions Accessible for Disabled People** Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Disability Rights Commission, Belfast, 2004

 Quick link  <http://www.equalityni.org/>





**Plan of Action: World Programme for Human Rights Education, First Phase** by Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, 2006

 Quick link  <http://www.unesco.org>

**Play it right! Educational Games and Activities for Children** by Equitas, International Centre for Human Rights Education, Montreal, 2007

 Quick link  <http://www.equitas.org>

**Popular Education for Human Rights** by RP Claude, Human Rights Education Associates, Cambridge, MA, 2000

 Quick link  <http://www.hrea.org>

**Service Learning, Lesson Plans and Projects** by K Belisle, and E Sullivan, Human Rights Education Associates, New York and Cambridge, 2007

 Quick link  <http://www.hrea.org/>

**The Human Rights Act: Changing Lives** by S Sceats, British Institute of Human Rights, London, 2005

 Quick link  <http://www.bih.org>





## Useful websites

Amnesty International UK

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/>

Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

<http://www.borini.info>

British Institute of Human Rights

<http://www.bihhr.org>

British Red Cross Society

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/index.asp?id=39992>

Centre for Global Education Belfast

<http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/>

Chatham House Rules

<http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/about/chathamhouserule/>

Children's Law Centre

<http://www.childrenslawcentre.org/>

Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)

<http://www.caj.org.uk/>

Council of Europe

<http://www.coe.int>

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

<http://www.equalityni.org>

Equitas, International Centre for Human Rights Education, Canada

<http://www.equitas.org>

European Court of Human Rights

<http://www.echr.coe.int/echr/>

Human Rights Centre, School of Law, Queens University Belfast

<http://www.law.qub.ac.uk/Research/HumanRightsCentre/>

Human Rights Education Associates

<http://www.hrea.org/>

Lift-Off (Primary School curriculum materials)

<http://www.liftoffschools.com/>

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

<http://www.nihrc.org/>





Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

 <http://www.pprproject.org/>

Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster

 <http://www.transitionaljustice.ulster.ac.uk/>

UNICEF

 <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

 <http://www.unhchr.ch/>

UNESCO

 <http://www.unesco.org>





# PART 3: ACTIVITIES





## Overview

These activities have been designed to help facilitators introduce human rights and the basic instruments that exist to protect rights.

Each activity contains:

- **Aim**
- **Method**
- **Timing**
- **Materials required**
- **What to do before the session**
- **Step-by-step instructions**

The activities usually require some introduction by the facilitator about human rights using one of the main human rights documents relevant to your situation. There are then a range of activities from which to choose: role plays, small group discussions, games and quizzes, reading newspapers, and drawing rough maps, for example. There are step-by-step instructions and links to methods and tools described in [Part 2](#) of this resource.

### Activities about more specific rights issues in Northern Ireland

If your group is already aware of the basic concepts of human rights, you might wish to go on to learn more about specific areas of interest; for example, social and economic rights, or the Northern Ireland Bill of Rights process. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is required by statute to advise the UK Government on the scope for defining a Bill of Rights supplementary to those in the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Commission is currently deliberating on the nature and content of a Bill of Rights, and plans to submit its advice to the Secretary of State at the end of 2008.

The Commission has developed a range of materials in these areas, which are available from our website <http://www.nihrc.org>. Examples include:

 [Bill of Rights in Schools: A Resource for Post-primary Schools](#). This resource includes lessons on:

- Why does Northern Ireland need a Bill of Rights?
- What rights do we need for a decent standard of living?
- What does the Bill of Rights say about equality?
- How could the Bill of Rights protect ethnic minorities?
- How can there be just and equal treatment for the identities of communities?
- The importance of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.







- Why do we need social and economic rights in Northern Ireland?
- Human rights solutions from around the world.

Many of these activities can be adapted for use in groups of adults.

 [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual](#). This training manual includes activities which explore:

- conflicts between citizens
- policing
- abortion: right to life or right to choose
- parades
- racist and sectarian or other extremist speech
- invasion of privacy and reputation, and
- community restorative justice.

[Part 2](#) of this manual contains information on learning resources available from other organisations.





## ACTIVITY 1

---

### Introductions

#### Aim

- warm up the group to the theme of rights
- find out what the group knows and feels about rights, and
- help the participants get to know each other.

#### Method

An open-ended sentence to which participants add their own ideas.

#### Timing

15 to 20 minutes.

#### Materials required

None.

#### What to do before the session

Consider why introductions are important; people feel more comfortable contributing later if they have already spoken once.

Introductions also allow a trainer to take note of participants' names. Taking care to get names right is a simple way to establish a tone of respect for the individuals who are there; it increases positive feelings about the group, and participation. Shorter sessions (of one hour, say) will have less time for introductions, but consider some way of inviting participation early on in the session.

Introductions can also be a good warm-up exercise for the group and allow the trainer to note where the starting points are for the participants.

Consider an open-ended question that will help you know more about the group and make links to the topic you are planning to discuss in the session.

For example:

- I believe everyone should have the right to...
- Human rights are...
- Human rights and equality are...
- Human rights in Northern Ireland are...
- Human rights and peace are...
- Human rights and democracy is...
- A Bill of Rights is...





If you create a climate of openness, these questions can allow you to gauge both knowledge and feelings about these topics before you begin.

### Step-by-step instructions

1. Invite participants to fill in the blanks in this sentence:

*My name is ... and I am with ... (organisation) [or I am interested in... I believe that everyone should have the right to...*

Give a few minutes for people to think, and try to make sure they feel comfortable in taking the sentence as seriously or light-heartedly as they wish.

Start by demonstrating your own answer. If people do not want to answer this question, say that you will come back to them at the end to give them another opportunity and they may join it at that point.

2. While people are sharing with the group, note three columns:

Name	Organisation/interest	Right they wish to claim (or other answer)

If you can't understand someone's name, pause and make sure you have got it; getting it right is a courtesy.

3. When people are finished introducing themselves:

- ask for people to repeat back the sorts of answers they have heard from the others. Were there any patterns?
- link the interests of the group with the goals of the session if you can. If you can't, be clear on what you will be able to do and what you will not, in the time available, and
- refer back to your list of names and try to call everyone by name during the workshop if you can; your efforts can increase the level of warmth and respect in the group.





## ACTIVITY 2

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### Human rights squares

#### Aim

- get people moving around, meeting each other in a fun way
- demonstrate that participants already have experience and ideas about rights, and
- share information.

#### Method

Game: competition to fill in a quiz card.

#### Timing

20 to 30 minutes, depending on size of group and discussion.

#### Materials required

- [human rights squares handout](#) (p54) for each member of the group, and
- pens.

#### What to do before the session

Print out and look over the handout and consider how you would fill in each box.

Anticipate the types of issues that may be raised in discussion and how you will handle them.

Consider how this activity might work with others in this manual to build a session to introduce human rights. For example, you might want to use some of the introductory material to introduce more about what human rights are and what the provisions are of a human rights tool like the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), or the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

Read the background material provided in [Part 2: Resources](#) about what rights are and how they work.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Using members of the group as sources of information, get an answer for as many squares as you can and write it in the square. Each answer should come from a different person, who must initial that square for you.





Try for a range of countries to be represented; think international! Stop when time is called.

2. Get feedback from people on how they got on with filling in the sheet. Ask for 'hands up people who got more than five squares filled in...10...etc,' until you have your top scorer.
3. Go through the chart and share answers. Ask people to call out the ones they found particularly difficult and share ideas, (they may be stumped and ask you for ideas so make sure you have at least one idea for each square yourself).



### **Some points to make**

Human rights are all around us and affect our daily lives.  
We know more about human rights than we may think.  
There are lots of issues raised by human rights; our assumptions about them may be questioned by someone else.

➡ Activity 2 has been adapted from [Human Rights Here and Now: Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) by Nancy Flowers Amnesty International, USA, 1998.





## HANDOUT

### Human Rights Squares

Using members of the group as sources of information, get an answer for as many statements as you can and write it in the square. Each answer should come from a different person, who must initial that square for you. Try for a range of countries to be represented; think international! Stop when time is called.

A human right	Country where human rights are violated	Document that proclaims human rights	Group in your country that wants to deny rights to others	Country where people are denied their rights because of their race or ethnicity
Organisation which fights for human rights	Film/video that is about human rights	Singer who sings about rights	Right your parents had/have that you do not	Country where human rights situation has improved recently
Type of human rights violation that most disturbs you	Book about rights	Right sometimes denied to women	Right that all children should have	Country where people are denied their rights because of religion
Human right not yet achieved by everyone in this country	Place where people claim right to establish nation or homeland	Human right being achieved around the world	Right of yours that is respected	Someone who is a defender of human rights





## ACTIVITY 3

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### Where do you stand on human rights?

#### Aim

- stimulate discussion about views and feelings people have about rights, and
- learn about the starting points of the group.

#### Method

Continuum.

#### Timing

20 to 30 minutes approximately.

#### Materials required

- posters that read 'Agree' and 'Disagree' in big letters, and
- [human rights statements](#) (p57).

#### What to do before the session

Put the posters up on either end of a large room. Give plenty of space for group members to move. Read about human rights in the [Part 2: Resources](#) section. Read about [continuums](#) in the resources section. Anticipate the questions or issues that may come up in your group.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduce the exercise by saying that you are going to read statements and invite people to take sides according to how strongly they agree or disagree with the statements. Tell them that these are statements that tend to produce strong feelings and the aim is to consider their own views and to listen to the views of others. It is not the purpose of the activity to reach agreement.
2. Read a statement and ask people to stand along the continuum, closer to 'Agree' or 'Disagree,' depending on how strongly they feel. When everyone is positioned along the continuum, ask if anyone would like to explain why they are where they are, and then invite a contribution from another side. After a short time, ask if anyone wants to change positions after what they have heard. Take note of the new positions, if any, and move along to the next statement following the routine but keeping the momentum.





3. When you have finished, you might want to ask participants how they felt and give room to resolve any outstanding issues. If any statement is so controversial that people want to continue talking about it, take note and you may be able to return to it in the remainder of your session.
4. Consider the learning in the activity by asking the group:
  - Which statements were easy to agree on? Difficult?
  - Why was it so difficult to find agreement on some statements?
  - Why was it easier with others?
  - Do participants feel more strongly about some of the issues than about others? Why?
  - Are there issues that participants would like to spend more time exchanging ideas about?



#### **Some points to make**

People already have strong views about human rights. This is why ground rules are needed.

Some views are backed up with better evidence than other views. Ask group members to reflect on how good their evidence is for the views they have expressed. There are areas about human rights on which reasonable people, with good evidence, may differ.

 Activity 3 has been adapted from [The European Convention on Human Rights: Starting Points for Teachers](#) by Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2004.  
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## **Human rights statements**

Human rights are ideals. They are not practical.

Human rights are evolving. This means they can never be permanent.

Children don't need to hear about human rights.

Men have more rights than women.

Human rights are a luxury that only rich countries can afford.

You can't enjoy your human rights unless you have enough to eat.

I don't need to promote your human rights. That is the job of the government.

We shouldn't protect the rights of criminals because they are breaking the law.





## ACTIVITY 4

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### Talking 'around' rights

#### Aim

- gather views of a number of rights-related issues in Northern Ireland

#### Method

Small group work.

#### Materials required

- flipchart paper and,
- markers.

#### Timing

15 to 30 minutes, depending on discussion.

#### What to do before the session

Consider how this activity can encourage less vocal participants to participate in discussion. They may feel more comfortable talking in a smaller group or commenting on other people's opinions. It is also a good way of having a 'whole group' discussion without the facilitator having to act as a chairperson, or one or two people dominating. Everyone has a say!

Read thoroughly the background briefings about rights and consider the most relevant points to raise for the group will be working with.

For example, consider following this activity with an introduction to one of the human rights instruments: [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

You can compare whether there is a basis for the list that has been generated by the group of the 'rights we have in Northern Ireland.' Then, you can go on to talk about the rights that are protected in law and see whether this changes any of the views expressed in the first activity.





## Step-by-step instructions

1. Write four or five issues or questions onto separate sheets of large paper.  
For example:
  - Sheet 1: Rights we have
  - Sheet 2: Consequences when rights are not respected
  - Sheet 3: What can I do to promote respect of rights?
  - Sheet 4: What can the government do to promote the respect of rights?
2. Divide into smaller groups of three or four people each. Give each group a different coloured marker and a sheet of flipchart paper with a topic on it. After a few minutes, call time and ask the group to rotate clockwise to the next sheet.
3. The group should read the ideas generated by the previous group and then tick [✓] the ideas they agree with, cross [x] those ideas they disagree with and put a question mark next to those ideas they are not sure about, and add or amend other ideas.
4. After a couple of minutes tell the group to rotate clockwise to the next sheet and continue the rotation until the sheets return to their original position. If you don't have room to rotate to the papers, then simply rotate the sheet of paper instead.
5. Each group gives feedback about the ideas generated, the areas of agreement and the areas of disagreement, etc. Note the areas of agreement and difference.

Use the resources in [Part 2](#) to extend this discussion. For example, with the group, study the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights Summary](#) or the [Human Rights Act summary](#) handouts. Are the rights listed on the sheets under 'Rights we have' to be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights/the Human Rights Act? Or are they covered under any other domestic legislation; if you think you can promise to find out and clarify later, do so.





### **Some points to make**

Make links with the instrument for human rights that you are working with. For example, the right to life is in the UDHR, the ECHR and the Human Rights Act.

Highlight the consequences when rights are not respected. Violations of human rights are both a cause and a symptom of violent conflict, so building a culture of respect for rights is important in trying to establish a lasting peace.


Note whether there are areas that need more information to address them.

Consider what participants can do to promote respect of rights, for example:

- to learn about rights and identify human rights issues in their area that affect them or people they care about
- raise awareness among other people
- respect the rights of others
- lobby governments and government bodies to respect and fulfil obligations to uphold rights of all members of society, and
- join an organisation that defends and promotes rights.

What can the government do to promote the respect of rights? The government can sign and ratify international treaties, change legislation, run awareness raising campaigns, make sure that services meet a human rights standard for their users, encourage and assist all eligible people to vote at election time, etc.

Consider whether the group wishes to take follow up actions about particular areas of concern or interest. Use the handout [Projects for Action](#) on Human Rights.

 Activity 4 has been adapted from [Circular Brainstorm, Methodologies to Encourage an Active Classroom Environment](#), compiled by Lesley McEvoy for Local and Global Citizenship module at School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, unpublished manuscript.





## ACTIVITY 5

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### Rules for a small island

#### Aim

- consider the nature of rights and how they can help a society work, and
- introduce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

#### Method

Role-play.

#### Timing

About 60 to 95 minutes.

#### Materials required

- flipchart
- markers, and
- copies of the [summary of the UDHR](#) (p35) for each group member.

#### What to do before the session

Consider how this activity can get people thinking about what rights are for. It is a way of trying to get people to think about what rules they would make if a society started from scratch. This is a famous philosophical problem too, explained here:

*'Supposing you have discovered a new country where no one has lived before, and where there are no laws and no rules. You have to live in that country, but you do not know anything about what sort of identity or status you will have there. For example, you do not know if you will be powerful or weak, or somewhere in between. The kind of rules you would make up, not knowing if you were powerful or weak, would show a commitment to both human rights and equality.'*

Familiarise yourself with the background to human rights and the UDHR, and note the points which strike you as important to make as a result of this exercise.





## Step-by-step instructions

1. Invite the participants to sit comfortably, and if they wish, to close their eyes to imagine a journey.

*'...You take your bags onboard a luxury liner and look forward to the holiday of a lifetime. Onboard you see all sorts of different people, all ages, from babies to elderly people, speaking lots of different languages or signing to each other, dressed in ways that suggest different cultures and religions - Sikh turbans and saris and Jewish yarmulkes. Once onboard you discover that the diversity goes further and there are activities to cater for every interest, type of social group, and physical abilities. The range is staggering from wheelchair basketball to Presbyterian worship services, to social evenings for gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgender people to meet, to science fiction book clubs, to political party youth events. Everyone is having a great time.*

*Then the ship hits an iceberg, and sinks. Miraculously, with everyone's help, all 2000 passengers find their way on to the lifeboats. Miraculously again, the passengers spend only a few hours on lifeboats before they spy land. With everyone's help, they all bump ashore. (You can open your eyes).*

*Finally, you are delighted to discover that there is fresh food and water on the island and it has everything that human beings need to support life. However, you need to think of the rules that you will live by, while you are awaiting rescue.*

2. Invite the group to work in committees of three or four people and try to name five rules for their common life together on this island.
3. After a few minutes, ask the group:
  - Were there rules that were easy to decide? Which were they?
  - Were there rules that were difficult?
  - Write up the rules as they are mentioned. Look for areas of agreement.
4. You forgot to mention something. This group is not the only group on the island. Does that change anything? Why? How?
5. How can the idea of rights help in dealing with such a situation? Are there principles that you would wish to follow in trying to negotiate with the other group who live on the island?
6. Read the opening statement of the UDHR: "We are born equal in dignity and rights", and remind people of how statements of rights can set down the values to which a society can aspire.
7. Hand out a copy of the UDHR. Note that the UDHR was developed out of an experience of conflict, to try to assist in keeping peace in the world





between nations.

8. Ask for volunteers to read out some of the headings and get a feel for the Declaration. Ask the group:

- What rights has the UN listed that they did not include?
- What rights has the group listed that the UN did not include?
- Why has the UDHR been described as the world's best kept secret?
- What difference might it make if everyone knew and understood the UDHR? What could be done to make this happen?



### **Some points to make**

Human rights are derived from human dignity and they are outlined in international, regional and national laws. They are universal, that is, they are for everyone because we are all human. Being human therefore means that we are all equal, all different.

Rights can set principles and values by which people live together, for example, equality and dignity. They can assist with how decisions are made, for example, one person - one vote.

They can help people maintain equality and keep one person or group from getting too much power or abusing it. They can help resolve conflict in a more peaceful way when it arises.

 Activity 5 has been adapted from [Freedom! Human Rights Education Pack](#) by C Adams *et al*, Amnesty International UK, London, 2001. Reproduced by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.





## ACTIVITY 6

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### How do needs and wants relate to rights?

#### Aim

- consider what it means when basic needs are not being met and the relation of basic rights to basic needs.

#### Method

Small group work.

#### Timing

About 1 hour.

#### Materials required

- 3 x 5 inch cards
- old magazines
- glue, and
- art supplies.

#### What to do before the session

Read the background materials about human rights carefully. Consider whether you want to take your group further into a topic like social and economic rights or Bills of Rights.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Ask participants, working in small groups, to create 10 to 20 cards that illustrate the things they think human beings need to be healthy and happy. They may draw these things on cards, or cut out pictures from magazines.
2. Each pair/group exchanges cards with one another. The group then sorts out the new cards into categories:
  - Which things are NEEDS (for example, essentials for survival, such as food, health care, shelter)?
  - Which things are WANTS but not NEEDS (for example, desirable but not necessary for survival, such as toys, education or voting rights)?
  - Which things are neither?







3. The groups which exchanged cards join together and compare their cards. They then try to reach agreement on categories for all the cards. When they have done this, ask the group to discuss:

- Which pile of cards is bigger? Why?
- If they had to move two cards from the NEEDS pile to the WANTS pile, which two would they choose?
- How would their life be affected by this change?

4. Ask the whole group to combine their cards. Attach them to a wall or chalkboard to complete a class list. Discuss some of these questions:

- Are all human needs included in the NEEDS list? Are there other needs that should be added to the list?
- Are all the WANTS included? Can the group think of others?
- Is it easy to differentiate between wants and needs?
- What happens to someone when his, or her, wants are not fulfilled?
- What happens to someone when his, or her, basic needs are not met?
- What happens to a community when many people's basic needs are not met?
- Are there people who don't have their basic needs met in the world? In the UK and Ireland? In your community?
- What actions can be taken to help meet the basic needs of others in the world, in the UK and Ireland? In the community?
- Are there such things as basic needs common to everyone everywhere in the world?
- Are these needs always met?
- What influences our wants?
- How are wants influenced by age? Gender? Culture? Ethnicity?
- What is the relationship between human needs and human rights?
- Are there situations where 'wants' conflict with 'needs'?
- Are there situations where a persons' 'wants' conflict with the 'needs' of others? Are these situations to do with rights? For example, do future generations have a right to a clean planet in which to survive? What implications does that have for our wants and/or needs now?

It may be appropriate to do further work after this session, for example, on social and economic rights or Bills of Rights.





### **Some points to make**

Some people define human rights as a human need that is protected. People often do not realise that they have rights that are protected in law. For them, finding out about rights is vital to promoting, defending and realising these rights.

Sometimes needs and wants are in conflict and it may help to distinguish between them, particularly if the wants of some people are diminishing the needs and human dignity of others, or those wants are only achievable by destroying or infringing their rights.

Sometimes people will differ on what needs and wants are and sometimes there are good arguments on both sides. These differences need to be worked out by ordinary people, by politicians, and sometimes by the courts.

➡ Activity 6 has been adapted from [Human Rights Here and Now](#) by Human Rights Educators Network, USA, 1998.





## ACTIVITY 7

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### Draw it: a game

#### Aim

- develop knowledge of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

#### Method

A team game like 'Pictionary'.

#### Timing

45 minutes approximately.

#### Materials required

- [summary of the UDHR](#) (p35)
- a large sheet of paper on which to record the scores
- sheets of paper (A4 size) and pens for the group drawings - one sheet per team per round of the game, and
- sticky tape, Blu Tack or pins to display the drawings.

#### What to do before the session

Select the rights you want the group to work with from the UDHR and make a list for use in the game.

Before you do this activity, you should read through the UDHR and be familiar with what is meant by human rights. For example, that they are internationally guaranteed, legally protected, focus on the dignity of human beings, protect both individuals and groups, cannot be taken away and belong to everyone because we are all human.

You will need to decide how to use the UDHR. If people have very little knowledge of human rights you may want to use the chart (or the handout) before you start the activity, so that people have some clue as to what they should be guessing! If participants have more knowledge, use the chart at the end to stimulate discussion about the rights that were not drawn.

Be aware that people who consider themselves poor artists may think this will be too difficult for them. Reassure them that you are not looking for works of art and encourage everyone to have a go.





Use the summary version of the UDHR to find rights for drawing. Some suggestions are:

- the right to life
- freedom from torture
- the right to a fair trial
- freedom from discrimination
- the right to privacy
- the right to education
- freedom from slavery
- freedom of association
- freedom of expression
- the right to a nationality
- freedom of thought and religion
- the right to vote
- the right to work
- the right to health
- the right to own property, and
- the right to marry and found a family.

For a small group of less than eight people, you might want to play as one team; ask one person to draw the first round and whoever guesses it draws the next round, etc.

### **Step-by-step instructions**

1. Ask participants to get into small groups of four or five people and to choose a name for their team. Explain that you will give one person in each team an Article from the UDHR to draw. The others in the team have to guess which right it is. The team that guesses first scores a point.
2. The team that scores the most points at the end wins. Tell the teams to collect several sheets of paper and a pencil and to find somewhere to sit around the room. The teams should be spread out so they do not hear each other.
3. Call up one member from each team. Give them one of the rights on your list, for example, 'freedom from torture' or 'the right to life'. Tell them to return to their groups and to make a drawing to represent the right while their teammates try to guess what it is. They may only draw images; no numbers or words may be used.
4. No speaking is allowed by the person drawing, except to confirm the correct answer. The rest of the team may only state guesses. They may not ask questions.





5. After each round, ask all the drawers to write on their pictures what the right was, whether they finished or not, and to put the paper to one side.
6. Do a second round; call new people to be the drawers and give them a different right. Do a round for each member of the teams, about five to seven is probably enough. A different person should draw each round. Try to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to draw at least once.
7. At the end, ask the groups to pin up their pictures so that the different interpretations and images of the different rights can be compared and discussed. Ask the group:
  - Was it easier or harder than people had expected to depict human rights?
  - How did people choose how to depict a particular right? Where did they get the images from?
  - How do the different images of each right compare? How many different ways were there to depict and interpret the same idea?
  - After all the pictures have been reviewed, ask how much, or how little, the participants discovered they knew about rights.
  - Do they think that human rights have any relevance to their own lives? Which ones?



### **Some points to make**

The purpose of this activity is to have a bit of fun while learning more about rights and working in a team.

There may be some surprising ways in which we form opinions about what rights are and how rights are relevant in our daily lives.

 Activity 7 has been adapted from [Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) by P Brander *et al*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003. © Council of Europe





## ACTIVITY 8

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### Human rights in the news

#### Aim

- identify where human rights are in current events, and
- develop a critical approach to different ways in which newspapers report human rights.

#### Method

Analysis of a newspaper.

#### Materials required

- copies of the days' newspapers
- scissors
- tape
- a large sheet of paper
- a magic marker
- [summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (p35), and
- [human rights in the news handout](#) (p72).

#### Timing

One hour approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Become familiar with the [Human Rights Act 1998](#). Pay particular attention to articles that relate to freedom of expression.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Bring two copies of the recent newspapers (perhaps, tabloid, broadsheet and local paper) and hand them out to small groups with scissors, tape, a large sheet of paper, a magic marker, a summary of the UDHR, and the exercise sheet.
2. Instruct each group to read right through the newspaper carefully and prepare a report on the coverage it gives to human rights, cutting out anything they consider deals with a human rights issue.
3. Ask them to consider which Article in the UDHR applies to each cutting, and in each case decide if this is a right won, a right demanded, or a right denied.





4. When they have answered the questions in the exercise sheet, each group presents its findings to the rest of the class. The class should then decide which paper wins a human rights award and which paper gets the human rights wooden spoon.




### **Some points to make**

Human rights activists are very concerned with freedom of expression and a free press because both are important in a democracy.

Journalists and newspapers usually express a commitment to fairness and impartiality. However, all newspapers have to choose what is relevant to report and what value it should be given in the context of the paper; for example, what page it is on, and what size or feeling the headline has.

The most active citizens will seek out a range of views in the media and read them critically.

Relate this activity to the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

 Activity 8 has been adapted from [Human Rights Here and Now](#) by Human rights Educators Network, USA, 1998.





## HANDOUT

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### Human rights in the news

Your group has been given newspapers to find out what kind of coverage they give to human rights.

Cut out anything you can find that deals with a human rights issue. All the cuttings need to be sorted into one of the following categories:

- a right claimed
- a right respected, or
- a right denied.

Think about which type of right is involved in your cuttings. Can you find the number of any relevant Article in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? You should write the number on the cutting.

Discuss the following:

1. What can your group find out about this newspaper?
2. Who owns it?
3. How much does it cost?
4. How many people read it?
5. What sort of people make up its readership?
6. What do you think is the political slant of the paper, if any?
7. What is its main headline?
8. How much (%) of the paper is given over to international news, home news, television stories, private lives of famous people and gossip, sport, advertisements?
9. Is there anything in the newspaper that your group feels is itself an abuse of human rights (such as an invasion of privacy, writing that is demeaning to someone because of his/her race, sex, disability or sexual orientation)?

You need to agree the answers to all these questions among your group and write them down on the paper provided.

You will have to present your findings to the rest of the group. What is your assessment of the coverage the newspaper gives to human rights?







## ACTIVITY 9

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### Human rights and equality: step forward

#### Aim

- explore how a commitment to human rights means a commitment to equality and *vice versa*, and
- explore what it is like to be someone else in the society.

#### Method

Role play.

#### Materials required

- list of [role cards](#) (p76)
- list of [situations and events](#) (p77)
- an open space
- tape/CD of soft relaxing music
- [A-Z of practical equality handout](#) (p78), and
- summary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (p35)

#### Timing

20 to 30 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Read the background materials on human rights. Think about how you would explain what human rights and equality have to do with each other and why they are both important.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Start with the preamble from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". Explain that this session will explore more about the links between human rights and equality. The activity will demonstrate how choices, or lack of them form a pattern in society.
2. Create a calm atmosphere with some soft background music. Alternatively, ask the participants for silence. Hand out the role cards at random, one to each participant. Tell them to keep it to themselves and not to show anyone else. Invite participants to sit down and read their role card.





3. Now ask participants to begin getting into role. To help, read out the following questions, pausing after each one, to give people time to reflect and build up a picture of what their role might involve. You ask what it 'might' be like because each person's experience or imagination will be different as each person is different.
  - What might your childhood be like? What sort of house might you live in? What kind of games might you play? What sort of work might your parents do?
  - What might your everyday life be like now? What sort of house might you live in? Where might you socialise?
  - How much money might you earn each month?
  - What do you do in your leisure time?
  - What might excite you? What might you be afraid of?
4. Now ask the participants to remain absolutely silent as they line up beside each other (like a starting line). Tell the participants you are going to read out a list of **situations or events**. Every time that a participant can answer 'yes' to a statement, they should take a step forward. Otherwise, they should stay where they are. Tell them the answers will depend on the details they have determined about their role.
5. Read out the **situations or events** one at a time. Pause for a while between each statement to allow people to step forward and to look around and to take note of their positions in relation to each other. When all the situations have been read out, invite everyone to take note of their final positions and to announce their roles.
6. Give the group a couple of minutes to come out of their roles, perhaps by doing a big stretch to the ceiling and to the floor, or a similar activity to change the pace.
7. Ask the group about what happened and how they feel about the activity. Talk about the issues raised and what they learned. Be alert to statements that may stereotype groups of people or their reactions; remember everyone has a different personality or may react to situations differently. You might ask:
  - How did people feel stepping forward, or not?
  - For those who stepped forward often, at what point did they begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as they were?
  - Did anyone feel that there were moments when their basic human rights were being ignored?
  - How easy or difficult was it to play the different roles? How did they imagine the character and situation of the person they were playing?
  - Does the exercise mirror society in some way? How?





- Which human rights are at stake for each of the roles? Could anyone say that their human rights were not being respected or that they did not have access to them?
  - What first steps could be taken to address the inequalities of society?
  - What can the government do to promote human rights and equality?
8. You may wish to look now at one of the instruments - the UDHR, the ECHR or the Human Rights Act. Ask participants to note the headings in the instrument, the types of rights that are there? They should tick the Articles that may affect their rights or access to rights in the roles that they were playing.
9. Ask the group to consider personal action and attitudes. Some ideas are in the handout: [A to Z of practical equality](#). Alternatively, your group can create your own A to Z. Ask each member of the group, or in pairs, to choose a letter and think of something else that demonstrates a commitment to equality in a practical way. Insert their new words and read out the resulting changed document as a way to close the session.



### **Some points to make**

Equality is one of the founding principles of the modern human rights movement. Human rights are founded on the principle that people can be all equal AND all different.

Human rights can be an important practical tool for people facing discrimination or disadvantage.

 Activity 9 has been adapted from [Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) by P Brander *et al*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003. © Council of Europe





## Role cards

Photocopy this page and cut out a role card for each member of the group.

You are an unemployed single mother.

You are the president of a party-political youth organisation (whose 'parent' party is now in power).

You are the daughter of a wealthy local family. You study economics at university.

You are the son of a Chinese immigrant who runs a successful business.

You are an Arab girl living with your parents who are devout Muslims.

You are the daughter of the US Ambassador. You live in Iraq.

You are a soldier in the army, doing compulsory military service.

You are the owner of a successful import-export company.

You are a young man and a wheelchair user.

You are a retired worker from a factory that makes shoes.

You are a 17-year-old Roma woman who has not finished primary school.

You are the boyfriend of a young artist who is addicted to heroin.

You are a prostitute/sex worker and are HIV positive.

You are a 22-year-old lesbian.

You are a trained school teacher, unemployed, not fluent in the official language of the country where you live.

You are a fashion model of African origin.

You are a 24-year-old refugee from Afghanistan.

You are a homeless young man, 27 years old.

You are a migrant worker from Mali with insecure immigration status.

You are the 19-year-old son of a farmer living in a remote country area.





## Situations and events

You have never encountered any serious financial difficulty.

You have decent housing with a telephone line and television.

You feel that your language, religion and culture are respected in the society where you live.

You feel that your opinion on social and political issues matters, and your views, are listened to.

Other people consult you about different issues.

You are not afraid of being stopped by the police.

You know where to turn for help and advice if you need it.

You have never felt discriminated against because of your origin.

You have adequate social and medical protection for your needs.

You can go away on holiday once a year, or more.

You can invite friends for dinner at home.

You can study and follow the profession of your choice.

You are not afraid of being harassed or attacked on the street, or in the media.

You can vote in national and local elections.

You can participate in an international seminar abroad.

You can practise your religion freely and openly and celebrate your most important religious festivals with family and friends.

You are not afraid for the future of your children.

You can buy new clothes when you want or need them.

You can fall in love with the person of your choice.

You feel that your competence is respected and appreciated.

You can use and benefit from the Internet.





## HANDOUT

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### **A to Z of practical equality**

A is for action

B is for being informed

C is for caring enough to challenge, first yourself

D is for seeking out diversity and difference

E is for equality and no easy answers

F is for festivals, friendships, food and fun

G is for growing

H is for human dignity, and hope that never gives up

I is for being inspired by others

J is for joining with others for justice

K is for keeping on trying

L is for laughing at yourself, and learning another language

M is for making up your own mind

N is because nobody's perfect

O is for opening your eyes to the oppression of others

P is for politics, power, and participating in your local community

Q is for asking questions rather than thinking you know

R is for respecting differences

S is for starting now

T is for taking time to listen

U is for being unique, just like everyone else

V is for valuing equally every person

W is for working for a fairer world

X is for challenging xenophobia (fear of so called 'outsiders')

Y is for the courage to be yourself, and

Z is for zebras because you can't tell whether they are black or white.



A to Z of practical equality has been adapted from [All Different, All Equal](#) Youth Directorate, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1995. © Council of Europe





## ACTIVITY 10

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### Human rights and signposts to democracy

#### Aim

- assess Northern Ireland as a democratic society, and
- identify roles that government or the people can play in helping the society become more democratic.

#### Method

Small group work and blue skies.

#### Materials required

- flipchart
- pens, and
- handout of [audit sheets](#) (p82).

#### Timing

60 to 85 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Consider whether this activity is right for your group; it would probably work best for a group in which the concepts of human rights are already familiar.

Make sure you are familiar with all of the measures to assess a democracy on the handout. A suggested definition of democracy is 'a form of government in which sovereign power resides in the people as a whole... a social state in which citizens have equal rights, without hereditary or arbitrary differences of rank or privilege'.

Make sure you can explain what human rights has to do with democracy. For example, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly (Articles 9 and 10 of the [Human Rights Act 1998](#)) are both very important rights for the functioning of a democracy because a democracy aims to achieve open and transparent government, with regular free and fair elections. Democracy relies on freely available information, open and stimulating debate and persuasion rather than coercion.

**Suggested alternative:** Another (and more visual way) of doing this exercise is to get participants to draw a "road to democracy". The road can include rectangular signposts which point the way to a more democratic society (for example, free elections); round signposts for barriers to democracy (for example, terrorism/violence by the state) and triangular





signposts for dangers to democracy (for example, discrimination).

### **Step-by-step instructions**

1. Open the discussion with **blues skies** thinking about what is meant by 'democracy'. Put the definitions on a flipchart.
2. Photocopy the 'Signposts to Democracy' sheets and the audit sheets in the main materials and distribute these to the group.
3. Divide the participants into small groups and ask each group to read the democratic signposts and then rate Northern Ireland on the audit sheets.
4. Ask each group to report: (1) the total score it gave to Northern Ireland; (2) the areas where Northern Ireland is weakest; (3) the areas where Northern Ireland is strong. Ask those reporting to give reasons for the rating.
5. Ask individuals to write down the three things which they think would make Northern Ireland more democratic.
6. What role does debate (that is, conflict between different views) play in a democracy? What is the democratic process to deal with different opinions or views?
7. Ask people to consider what they can do as individuals, what the government can do and what community organisations - like the one in which they are meeting - can do. Consider the question: is democracy everyone's job? Why or why not?







### **Some points to make**

Mahatma Gandhi once famously observed, “*We ought to judge each society by how it treats the most vulnerable and weakest of its members.*” Human rights standards support that measure. The Human Rights Act and other human rights instruments aim to build this measure into law.

Democracy is not up to other people, organisations or institutions to build, strengthen or defend. Democracy depends on the active involvement of all its members to be at its strongest.

 Activity 10 has been adapted from [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual](#) by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Belfast, 2000.





## HANDOUT

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### **Audit sheets: signposts of democracy**

Read the following 'signposts of democracy' and then give Northern Ireland a democratic rating (1 to 10).

**Citizenship participation** - May take many forms in a democracy: standing or voting in elections, attending public meetings, becoming informed of, and debating, government policies, protesting and paying taxes.

**Equality** - All individuals shall be valued equally, experience equal opportunity and shall not be discriminated against because of their race, ethnic origin, religion, political belief, disability, sexual orientation, age or gender.

**Political tolerance** - The acceptance and inclusion of the views and beliefs of different groups residing within the democracy through discussion and debate.

**Accountability** - Elected officials and civil servants must make decisions and take action according to the wishes of the people, not for themselves.

**Transparency** - The press and the people should be able to attain information about what decisions are being made on their behalf and by whom.

**Regular, free and fair elections** - Every adult should have the right to vote and stand for elections without obstacles put in their way.

**Economic freedom** - The state should not entirely control the economy. Citizens should be entitled to some private ownership of property and businesses, while workers may join trade unions.

**Control of the abuse of power** - Courts and agencies have the right to protect persons against corruption, police abuse of power and any illegal action by an elected official or a branch of government.

**Bill of rights** - A list of rights and freedoms guaranteed to all people in the country (sometimes part of a constitution). A bill of rights limits the power of government and may also impose duties on individuals and organisations.

**Accepting the results of elections** - Sometimes losers of an election are reluctant to accept the result. This is against democratic principles.





**Human rights** - Those values that reflect respect for human life and human dignity. Examples are the right to freedom from torture, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Democracy emphasises the value of every human being.

**Multi-party system** - In order to reflect the different viewpoints in society, more than one party must participate in the competition for the running of government. This system provides voters with a choice of candidates, parties and policies to vote for.

**The rule of law** - In a democracy, no one is above the law. This means that everyone must obey the law and be held accountable if they violate it. Democracy also insists that the law be equally and fairly enforced.

### Democratic rating

Rate Northern Ireland in relation to the following  
(1 = poor, 10 = very good)

Citizenship participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Equality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Political tolerance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Transparency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Regular, free and fair elections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Economic freedom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Control of the abuse of power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bill of rights	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Accepting the results of elections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Human rights	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Multi-party system	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The rule of law	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10





## ACTIVITY 11

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### European Convention: Each one teach one

#### Aim

- enable participants to learn basic information about the European Convention on Human Rights. This is important because it is the basis for a domestic law called the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

#### Method

Individuals introduce each other to facts about the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). This method could be adapted to introduce the Human Rights Act too.

#### Materials required

- strips of paper, made from [facts about the European Convention](#) (p86)
- flipchart, and
- and pens.

#### Timing

30 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Become familiar with the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and how it relates to the Human Rights Act. The Convention became part of the Law in Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 2 October 2000 by way of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Until 2000, an individual who felt his or her rights had been violated had little choice other than to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights, a process that could take many years. However, under the Human Rights Act 1998 an individual can now rely on many of the rights contained in the ECHR in the UK courts, which should be a quicker and less costly procedure than going to the European Court. If the court finds in favour of the claimant, he or she may be awarded compensation, and the government will probably have to change the law. However, even if local courts do not uphold the alleged violation, the claimant still has the right to bring his or her case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The ECHR is also important because of the debates on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 states that the Bill of Rights should supplement the rights which are in the European Convention on Human Rights.





## Step-by-step instructions

1. Prepare [facts about the European Convention](#). Photocopy the facts and cut into thirty individual strips. Each card should have one piece of information or fact that the participant will share with other participants.
2. Hand out one card to each participant on a random basis. Either give everyone a different fact or the same facts (which would give two or three people the same information to teach).
3. Each participant should read the information on the card. Each person has to 'teach' or transfer his or her knowledge verbally and individually to as many other participants as possible. Each participant needs to listen in order to learn facts from other participants. The participant should be encouraged to give an example or raise a question about the information on the card. The facilitator should circulate around the room to help with the activity.
4. To conclude, ask the group:
  - What did you learn that surprised you?
  - What information is not clear?
  - What did you learn about the European Convention on Human Rights?

➡ Activity 11 has been adapted from [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual](#) by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Belfast, 2000.





## Facts about the European Convention on Human Rights

Photocopy these pages and cut facts into thirty strips

1. The ECHR protects a person's right to marry and have a family.
2. Everyone is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his or her possessions.
3. The ECHR protects our freedom of expression.
4. Everyone has the right to join a club or a trade union and to associate with others.
5. The ECHR protects our right to privacy.
6. Everyone has a right to education.
7. Everyone has the right to life.
8. No one shall be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
9. No one shall be forced to work.
10. The ECHR protects the rights of people who are arrested to be informed of the reasons for the arrest in a language they understand.
11. Everyone has the right to a fair trial.
12. Everyone has the right to the free assistance of an interpreter if they cannot understand the language used in court.
13. Parents have the right to choose the nature of their children's education, in conformity with their own religion and philosophical convictions.
14. Everyone is protected by each Convention Article without discrimination on any ground such as race, sex, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.
15. The ECHR protects the right to free elections.
16. The ECHR led to a ban on corporal punishment in schools in the UK.
17. The ECHR led to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Northern Ireland for those over the age of 18.
18. The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the ECHR into domestic legislation in the UK.
- 19.





20. The ECHR provides that anyone detained on the grounds of mental illness has a right to seek a ruling from a court as to whether they should continue to be detained.
21. The ECHR provides that journalists should only have to reveal their sources in exceptional cases.
22. The ECHR requires that the authorities can only tap a telephone or plant a surveillance bug if there is clearly a law allowing it and, even then, the law can only do so when it is necessary to prevent crime or protect national security.
23. The ECHR provides that people should not be required to swear an oath contrary to their religion as a condition for taking political office.
24. No one can be deported to a country where they face a real risk of torture or death.
25. The ECHR provides that employers cannot dismiss someone because they refuse to join a union which operates a 'closed shop'.
26. Anyone claiming they have been deprived of their property by the state has a right to receive a public trial before an independent and impartial court.
27. The ECHR prohibits the courts from refusing to award custody of a child to someone simply on the basis of their sex, religion or sexual orientation.
28. The ECHR provides that soldiers or police officers may use lethal force only where it is necessary to do so in order to save lives, make an arrest or quell a riot.
29. The ECHR states that anyone who feels their Convention rights have been violated should have the right to an effective remedy in their national courts. If they are not satisfied with the availability of a remedy, they may take their case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. This is still possible now that the Human Rights Act has become law.
30. Some rights in the ECHR, like the right to protection from torture, are absolute and must be given effect to at all times. Others, like the right to liberty or to free expression, may be limited at a time of war or emergency.
31. If someone wins a case in Strasbourg, the UK Government will generally have to make some changes in the law. The person who took the case may get a limited amount of compensation.





## ACTIVITY 12

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### Just a minute for the European Convention

#### Aim

- share information in a lively way about what the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is and what rights it contains, and
- encourage participants to raise issues and questions about the ECHR

#### Method

Game, based on the popular radio show format. This method could be adapted for the Human Rights Act too.

#### Materials required

- Facts on index cards or strips made from [facts about the European Convention](#) (p86), and
- a watch with a second-timer.

#### Timing

45 to 60 minutes approximately, depending on group size.

#### What to do before the session

Read through this activity and decide how it will best suit your group. For example, this activity will probably work best in groups where people are already acquainted and comfortable with each other.

Become thoroughly familiar with all the facts you will use and make sure you anticipate questions people will have. Try to think about how you can explain the areas where there may be confusion.

Consider what else you might do with the material. For example, when you are concluding the session, it might be useful to classify the rights in the ECHR under the following headings:

- civil/political, and
- social/economic

(See the [glossary](#) in Part 2 for a definition of these terms)

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Prepare [fact cards](#) by photocopying the facts and cutting them into thirty individual strips. Each card should have one piece of information or fact







that the participant will share with other participants.

2. Hand out one card to each participant on a random basis. Give participants a few minutes to prepare to talk non-stop for one minute about the statement written on their slip of paper. The rules are: no hesitations, deviations or repetitions. They could talk about:
  - what they think the words mean
  - why people need that right protected
  - whether there are times or places when that right has not been protected, and
  - how the right could be best protected now.
3. Go around the circle and ask everyone to give their talk. They shouldn't take it too seriously; encourage people to have fun. Encourage reluctant speakers to have a go, but be flexible; you can reduce the time to 20 or 30 seconds, or offer to come back to them later in case they change their minds.
4. After each talk, allow two or three minutes for short comments. If people have a lot to discuss, make a note of the topic and come back to it at the end. Aim for a balance of participation in the discussion as usual, inviting participation especially from someone who hasn't spoken yet. When everyone has had their turn, go back and have the discussions that had to be cut short.
5. To reflect on the discussion and learning, ask the participants:
  - Was it difficult to talk non-stop on the topic for one minute?
  - Which were the toughest topics to talk about and why?
  - Which of the statements was most controversial and why?
  - What was the most surprising piece of information that people heard?
  - Any questions? How might we find out the answers?
  - What information did participants learn best? Why?

 Activity 12 has been adapted from [Compass - A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) by P Brander *et al*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2003. © Council of Europe





## ACTIVITY 13

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### Are these human rights violations?

#### Aim

- encourage participants to consider how to apply human rights in real life situations, and
- develop skills in identifying violations of human rights.

#### Method

A quiz, in pairs or small teams.

#### Materials required

- copies of [European Convention on Human Rights summary](#) (p36) for each group member
- one copy of [questions for Activity 13](#) (p92)
- a score sheet
- flipchart paper, and
- pens.

#### Timing

60 to 75 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Photocopy the question sheet, the score sheet and copies of the ECHR summary.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Divide the room into pairs or small group. You will deliver this like a pub quiz. In pairs, the participants must decide which of the issues is covered by the ECHR and whether there has been a breach of it. Allow 20 minutes for this exercise.
2. When all the questions are asked, indicate for each one, whether there is likely to be a breach or not. Ask participants to note their score on the sheets provided. Allow 10 minutes for this.
3. Ask the pairs to go over the list and consider whether there are three issues that should be included in a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Allow 20 minutes for this. Conclude the session by adding up their list of preferences and calculating which three are the most popular issues. Allow 10 minutes for this exercise.





➤ Activity 13 has been adapted from [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual](#) by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Belfast, 2000.



### **Some points to make**

The following is a summary of the current position under the ECHR in relation to the 10 issues:

1. The ECHR permits freedom of religion and it is unlikely that a total restriction on individuals praying in school would be justified.
2. The ECHR imposes no obligation on the parents. Where someone is not in state custody there does not seem to be an obligation on the state to provide food.
3. There is no right to any particular level of education in the ECHR. The UK has entered a specific reservation to the right to education indicating that this will be provided subject to resources.
4. Discrimination against homosexuals and lesbians is prohibited by the ECHR but only in relation to State action connected to other Convention rights, not in relation to the actions of political parties.
5. The ECHR does not guarantee a right to education in any particular language but does prohibit different treatment on grounds of language where no objective justification exists.
6. There is no right to health in the ECHR. However the right to life includes a positive obligation to protect life and may prohibit unreasonable refusal to provide care to someone in obvious danger of death. However, a decision to favour a younger patient over an older patient is not in itself a breach of the Convention.
7. A victim has a right to effective investigation of a crime which infringes rights to life, privacy or protection from inhuman treatment. Disregarding this duty may mean the investigation is not effective in ECHR terms.
8. The ECHR does not prohibit discrimination against ex-prisoners.
9. The State may restrict the freedom of the press where it is necessary to prevent crime or safeguard the rights of others. Prohibiting the publishing of instructions on how to make a bomb would be justified.
10. The ECHR allows the police to use reasonable force to make an arrest. However, hitting someone after they have been handcuffed and not posing a threat is unnecessary and amounts to inhuman treatment contrary to Article 3 of the ECHR.

➤ Adapted from [Human Rights for All](#) by E O'Brien, West Publishing Company, USA, 1996.





## Questions for Activity 13 (like a pub quiz)

### Are these human rights violations?

Decide if the following statements describe a human rights violation. If there is a human rights breach, decide whether it is covered in the European Convention on Human Rights.

1. Before class starts, the teacher says, "You can't pray in school".
2. A child in the family goes to sleep hungry because the parents have no money to buy food.
3. A woman receives poor education in her secondary school and is rejected for every job she applies for.
4. A political party refuses to allow a woman to stand as their candidate for an election when they discover that she is a lesbian.
5. An Irish-speaking student speaks Irish to another student. The principal tells the students that only English can be spoken in the school.
6. A woman is ill and is refused an operation because the health authority has only enough money to perform one operation and chooses a woman much younger.
7. A victim gives a statement to a police officer who then disregards it because the victim is a relative of the accused.
8. A man who has served 10 years in prison for possessing explosives is refused a job in a bank.
9. A newspaper is not allowed to publish the method of making a bomb.
10. A police officer arrests a man, who physically resists and yells abuse at the officer. The police officer handcuffs him and then hits him three times with his police baton.





## ACTIVITY 14

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### Rights at work in the European Court

#### Aim

- consider how rights work in real cases at the European Court of Human Rights.

#### Method

Role play/mock trial scenario.

#### Materials required

- case studies (p94)
- flipchart, and
- pens.

#### Timing

20 to 25 minutes approximately for each case (90 minutes total).

#### What to do before the session

Become familiar with the background to the [European Convention of Human Rights](#). An individual may take a case to the [European Court of Human Rights](#). It can take several years for a case to be heard. From October 2000, it has been possible to take a case to the courts in Northern Ireland under the [UK Human Rights Act 1998](#).

This Act includes the rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights. If the local courts do not uphold the claim, the claimant can still take the case to the European Court of Human Rights. If an individual wins their case there, governments often have to change laws or policies that are in conflict with the Court's ruling.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Divide the participants into the following three groups:
  - one group representing the applicant
  - one group representing the UK government, and
  - one group representing the European Court.
2. Read each case one at a time, to all three groups (or distribute copies). Ask the group to privately discuss each person's role and select a representative to report back on their main arguments.





## Case Studies

### Case 1

Jack was caned severely by his stepfather. A jury in a local court acquitted the stepfather of assault. Jack believes that the assault is inhuman treatment.

### Case 2

Jim is convicted of having sex with another man. This is illegal in his country. He believes that this is an infringement of his right to a private life. He believes that he has been discriminated against.

### Case 3

A politician who has had alleged links with paramilitary activities has been banned from issuing any broadcasts that might encourage support for his party. He believes that his right to freedom of expression has been violated. The state says some restrictions are justified in order to protect the rights of others.

3. Begin with the role of the applicant and ask that group to report his or her grievances. Move to the group representing the UK government and then let the Court of Human Rights decide if the complaint is upheld. Encourage participants to explain the reasons for their stance. Hold an overall discussion at the end, with conclusions on each case.
4. Conclude the discussions by informing them that each scenario is based on a real case at the European Court.

*Facilitator's notes for each case:*

**Case 1: *A v UK (1997)*** — A nine-year-old boy, 'A', was beaten by his stepfather, who has charged with assault but acquitted. The child claimed that there had been a violation of Article 3 of the ECHR, freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The Court ruled that the treatment of the boy was sufficiently severe to reach the level prohibited by Article 3 and that UK law did not provide adequate protection for children and vulnerable adults from ill treatment.

**Case 2: *Dudgeon v UK (1981)*** — Mr Dudgeon was questioned by police about his sexual activities while under investigation on a drugs charge. Homosexual activities were illegal in Northern Ireland at the time. The European Court of Human Rights held that Article 8 (the right to a private life) had been violated by the existence of the legislation in Northern Ireland. As a consequence of the judgment, the Homosexual Offences (NI)





Order 1982 was passed, thereby bringing the law on male homosexuality in Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the UK, where homosexual acts were already legal between consenting adults over the age of 21.

**Case 3: *McLaughlin v UK (1994)*** – The UK Government banned any broadcast consisting of words where the speaker represented a certain political party, or where the words solicited support for the party in question. The broadcaster did not have to be a member of the political party. The applicant, 'M', complained that as a result of these directives he was prevented from having equal access to the media, despite the fact that he was democratically elected and wanted to broadcast matters relevant to his constituents. The applicant took a case to the European Court stating that his right to freedom of expression had been violated and that he had been discriminated against. The Commission (stage before the Court) stated that the ban was provided for by law, that it was proportionate in the interests of national security and that it was legitimate, due to the party's alleged links with terrorist groups.

 Activity 14 has been adapted from [Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: A Training Manual](#) Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Belfast, 2000.



### **Some points to make**

You could highlight some examples of states taking action following judgments by the Court:

**Austria** changed its legislation on treatment of prisoners in mental hospitals and made emergency social funds available for foreign residents.

**Belgium** amended its laws on homeless people and adopted measures eliminating all discrimination against children born outside marriage.

**France, Spain, and the UK** passed laws on phone tapping.

**The Netherlands** amended its law on detention of patients with mental illnesses.

**Turkey** reduced the maximum duration of police custody.

**The UK** banned corporal punishment in schools.





## ACTIVITY 15

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### Introducing the Human Rights Act: ranking rights

#### Aim

- introduce the concepts of rights
- introduce some of the rights in the Human Rights Act, and
- stimulate discussion on why different rights are important.

#### Method

Small group.

#### Materials required

- [Statements of rights](#) (p98), and
- [Human Rights Act summary](#) (p38).

#### Timing

20 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Photocopy one set of [statements](#) for each group of five participants. Cut each into six strips and put into an envelope, labelled 'Ranking Rights'.

#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Divide participants into groups of five (or fewer according to the size of the group).
2. Explain to participants that they will look at six different rights and freedoms and decide whether some are more important than others, or whether they are equal.
3. Give each group an envelope containing the six statements and ask them to rank them in order of importance. Go through this example with the whole group. If they think the right to possessions is more important than the right to privacy they should place them like this:

**Possessions**

**Privacy**

If they think they are equal, they should place them like this:

**Possessions**

**Privacy**







They can put as many next to each other as they want. Allow 10 minutes for this.

4. Bring the whole group together to compare results. Ask for a volunteer from each group to give feedback. You might want to ask:
  - What were the top three rights for each group?
  - Were there any differences? And why?
  - Were there any rights that they think are more important than the six they were given?
5. Hand out the summary of the Human Rights Act. Ask participants to find the Articles for the six rights named on the cards. If any of them identified another right that their group felt was more important than the six given, ask them to look for that in the Human Rights Act too.



### **Some points to make**

Rights are NOT ranked in the Human Rights Act.

Notice that rights are written in different ways. For some rights, like the right not to be tortured (Article 3), there are no circumstances in which the state can interfere with the right. That is called an 'absolute right.' However, other rights are 'limited'. The freedom to express views under the Human Rights Act is limited by the duty to uphold the rights of others. The area is not clear cut and we, along with the politicians and the courts, have to come to agreements about where one person's rights end and another's start.

The Human Rights Act brings fundamental human rights into UK law. This Act includes rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). All new laws have to take the Human Rights Act into account and should not take away any of its rights and freedoms. Public authorities - local government, regional government, national government, and even the courts themselves, have to make sure they comply with the Act. People in the UK used to have to go to the European Court to protect human rights. From October 2000, it has been possible to take a case to the courts in Northern Ireland under the UK Human Rights Act 1998.



Activity 15 has been adapted from [Have I the right? A workshop pack on the Human Rights Act for Young People](#) by Charter 88 (Unlocking Democracy) London, 1998.





## **Statements of rights**

Photocopy this page, cut the statements into strips and put one set into one envelope per small group.

Right to education

Right to have possessions

Right to a fair trial

Right to privacy

Freedom from discrimination (right to be treated fairly)

Freedom of expression





## ACTIVITY 16

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### Mapping the Human Rights Act where you live

#### Aim

- explore how the Human Rights Act affects people's lives in communities where we live.

#### Method

Making a human rights map of the local community.

#### Materials required

- coloured markers or pencils
- flipchart paper
- [Human Rights Act in practice](#) (p102)
- local or regional maps, and
- copies of the [Human Rights Act summary](#) and full text.

#### Timing

60 to 90 minutes approximately.

#### What to do before the session

Consider this activity to build on a basic awareness of human rights and the Human Rights Act.

 This activity is based on the following famous quote by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1958, on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

*"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in, the school or college he attends, the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."*

Use the quote to start or end the session.

Read through the background to human rights, and make sure you are familiar with the Articles in the Human Rights Act.





Also read carefully through the step-by-step instructions below. There are lots of questions that could be used with the maps that people draw. As the facilitator, make sure that you are focusing on the questions likely to be most relevant to your group and your aims for the session.

### Step-by-step instructions

1. Divide the participants into groups of three or four. Ask each group to draw a map of their town (or neighbourhood). They should include their homes, major public buildings or landmarks (for example, parks, city/town hall, schools, places of worship) and public services (hospitals, GP and dental surgeries, fire station, police station) and any other places that are important to the community (shops, cemetery, post office, cinemas, petrol stations, local organisations, other workplaces or major industries/sources of income).
2. When the maps are complete, ask the participants to analyse their maps from a human rights perspective.
3. What human rights do they associate with different places on their maps? For example, a place of worship would be associated with freedom of thought, conscience and religion, a school with a right to education; the post office with the right to information, to privacy, to self expression.
4. Ask about places they may not necessarily associate with rights. For example, what rights might be at stake in the street? Or in the home? As they identify these rights, they should refer to the [summary of the Human Rights Act 1998](#) and write the Article number(s) next to the place on the map.
5. Ask a volunteer from each group to present its map to the whole group. They should try to summarise the smaller group's analysis of the human rights exercised in the community. Look for the differences and the similarities in the rights that are identified in the community.
6. There are lots of questions that you could ask the group about this exercise; choose the most relevant to meet the aims for the group.
  - Did any part of your map have a high concentration of rights? How do you explain this?
  - Did any parts have few or no rights associations? How do you explain this?
  - Are there any Articles in the Human Rights Act that seem to be especially exercised in this community? How can this be explained?
  - Are there any Articles in the Human Rights Act that no group included on their map? How can this be explained?





- Are there rights on the map that are not included in the Human Rights Act?
- Which of the rights involved are civil and political rights?
- Which are social, economic, and cultural rights?
- Did one kind of right predominate on the map? Did one kind of right predominate in certain areas? (for example, were there more civil and political rights at the court house, city hall or police station?)
- Can anyone see new ways to add rights to their map, especially those not included in the first version?
- Are there places on the map where people's rights are violated?
- Are there any people in this neighbourhood or town whose rights are violated?
- What happens in this neighbourhood or town when someone's human rights are violated?
- Are there places on this map where people take action to protect human rights and to prevent violations from occurring?
- What are the key human rights issues in the neighbourhood or town and how are they being addressed/should they be addressed? What is the responsibility of the government, other organisations, an ordinary citizen?




### **Some points to make**

The language and ideas of human rights have a dynamic life beyond the courtroom. Use some the examples of the [Human Rights Act in practice](#).

The language and ideas of human rights can be used to secure changes to policies, procedures and individual decisions.

The Human Rights Commission offers a free and confidential legal advice line if you believe that your rights have been breached.

 Activity 16 has been adapted from [Human Rights Here and Now](#) by Human rights Educators Network, USA, 1998.





## Examples of the Human Rights Act in practice

### Challenging discrimination

A mental health hospital had a practice of sectioning asylum seekers who spoke little or no English, without the use of an interpreter. After participating in a session about the Human Rights Act, members of a user-led mental health befriending scheme used human rights language to successfully challenge this practice. They argued that it breached the asylum seekers' right not to be discriminated against on the basis of language, and their right to liberty (Article 5).

### Taking positive steps to protect human rights

A social worker from a domestic violence team at a local authority realised during a training session about the Human Rights Act that human rights language could be used to secure new accommodation for a woman and her children at risk of serious harm from a violent ex-partner. Previously, when she had approached the housing authority seeking emergency accommodation for the family, she had been told that there was nothing available. The social worker explained that the authority had overriding positive obligations to protect the right of the woman and her children not to be treated in an inhuman and degrading way (Article 3) and, given the extreme risk in this case, their rights to life (Article 2).

### Using human rights where resources are an issue

A husband and wife had lived together for over 65 years. He was unable to walk unaided and relied on his wife to help him move around. She was blind and relied on her husband as her eyes. They were separated after he fell ill and was moved into a residential care home. She asked to come with him but was told by a local authority that she did not fit the criteria. Speaking to the media, she said, "*We have never been separated in all our years and for it to happen now, when we need each other so much, is so upsetting. I am lost without him. We were a partnership*". A public campaign launched by the family, supported by the media and various human rights experts and older people's organisations, argued that the local authority had breached the couple's rights to respect for family life (Article 8). The authority agreed to reverse its decision and offered the wife a subsidised place so she could join her husband in the care home.

 These examples are from [The Human Rights Act: Changing Lives](#) by the British Institute of Human Rights, London, 2007.





## ACTIVITY 17

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### Why are human rights like potatoes?

#### Aim

- provide a memorable message to close a session about the links between human rights, diversity and equality.

#### Method

Comparing human beings to potatoes!

#### Materials required

- one potato for each member of the group.

#### Timing

Two periods of five minutes each, with some time in between.

#### What to do before the session

Think through this sequence and practise presenting it. The final message can be a bit confusing to read or say for the first time.

Put a bowl of potatoes out at the beginning of the session. This will stimulate curiosity and interest in the whole session.

You should do the first part of this exercise when you need a lift or change of pace in the session. You could put a potato on each participant's seat before they come back from a break.


#### Step-by-step instructions

1. Tell people you will give them 90 seconds to examine their potatoes – so that they could find it again if need be. They are not allowed to mark their potatoes.
2. Collect the potatoes in a bowl, mix them around and put them in the middle of the room where everyone can see them.
3. Empty the bowl of potatoes onto the floor or a table in the middle of the room. Ask participants to find their potato. When they have found it, ask how they knew it was theirs. They will probably name features like 'eyes' and 'scars' and shape that make each potato different.





4. Then ask, 'What does this have to do with human rights?'. Take their guesses. Acknowledge all the creative answers and tell them your own:
  - "Human beings are like potatoes: we are all alike, we are all human, just like these are all potatoes. And we are all different too, just like these potatoes. So...human beings need human rights because we are all alike, we are all human. We need human rights because we are human and we are all different."
5. Thank the group for their participation and close.

 Activity 17 has been adapted from [Lift Off: Introducing Human Rights Education within the Primary Curriculum](#) by The LIFT OFF Initiative, Belfast and Dublin, 2003.







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