

War Solutions

Powered by youth

Les solutions pour la guerre

Dirigées par les jeunes

YOUTH WORKSHOP

Created by the Youth Media Team of the
International Conference on War Affected
Children - Winnipeg, MB, Canada
September, 2000

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Introduction: At a National Youth Forum on war affected children in Gimli, MB, seventy-five youth from across Canada and around the world developed series of recommendations. Some of the recommendations included are:

- Educate children within schools about current events and refugees
- In schools, address the issues as part of the curriculum
- Educate children in schools about the plight of refugees

In response to these recommendations, the youth media team at the conference developed this youth workshop. Please use it in your classroom, with your community youth group ... with everyone you know to help us spread awareness!

Workshop Outline:

1. Drawing Activity OR Short Scenario Activity (5-10 minutes)
2. Narrative and Discussion (15-25 minutes)
3. Quiz (10-15 minutes)
4. Action Discussion (5-15 minutes)
5. Summary Drawing (5 minutes)

DRAWING ACTIVITY

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Purpose:

This activity was designed to break the myths of war. It can also be used to determine whether or not the workshop has been successful, as it will reflect what has been learned.

Materials Needed:

A writing utensil, paper, and an active imagination!

Time:

5-10 minutes

Instructions:

1. When students are ready, ask them to take out a pen and paper. Tell them to draw a picture of what they think war looks like.
2. Tell them to draw quickly, three minutes should be adequate.
3. When they are done, ask them to list what is in their pictures (or what they would have put in their pictures had they been able to finish!). Expect things like guns, blood, dead bodies, and tanks to go on the list.
4. Tell them to put their pictures aside.
5. Carry on with the remainder of the workshop.
6. After the workshop is finished, tell them to take out their pictures again.
7. Depending on time, you can tell them to add anything they want to their pictures. If you're running out of time, simply ask if they WOULD add to their picture, and add these to the list from earlier.



SCENARIO ACTIVITY

Created by the Youth Media Team of the
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Purpose:

This activity shows some of the traumatizing things happening to children in war-affected areas.

Materials Needed:

Personal information sheets (in Appendix A) and envelopes.

Time:

5-10 minutes

Instructions:

1. Put personal information sheets in envelopes, or simply fold them and tape them closed.
2. Pass one out to every student, or even just a few. If you prefer they can be set out on desks before the workshop begins.
3. Allow participants to read out their sheets.
4. Once they have read it, ask them their thoughts on them. Ask people to share what is on their sheet, and explain that these are common occurrences for people living in war-affected areas.



NARRATIVE and DISCUSSION

Created by the Youth Media Team of the International Conference on War Affected Children - Winnipeg, MB, Canada
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Purpose:

The point of the activity is to allow you to visualize some of the sights and emotions that a child from a war affected country may experience. More than 300,000 children have experienced war and more will continue to if action is not taken.

Awareness is the first step to take in order to achieve our goal of peace. Again, the experiences expressed here are real life experiences. Although they may seem graphic, these are some of the less horrific experiences.

Materials Needed:

Narrative text (in Appendix B).

Time:

15-25 minutes

Instructions:

1. To begin this exercise, ask the group to sit quietly with their eyes closed. Some people may choose to rest their heads.
2. Explain that the ideas and scenes expressed through this text were taken from the stories shared by our delegates through out the conference
3. Warn your audience that the text that you are about to read to them may cause discomfort to some. Let them know that if at any point in the activity, they find themselves feeling uncomfortable that they may step out.
4. Read the text slowly and with emotion.
5. Consider the following questions in groups or as a class. You may choose to give several minutes for personal reflection.

What did my eyes see?

What did I feel?

How will this change me/my future?



QUIZ

Created by the Youth Media Team of the
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Purpose:

This activity helps to raise awareness by offering facts on the issues surrounding war-affected children.

Materials Needed:

Copies of the quiz
(found in Appendix C).

Time:

10-15 minutes

Instructions:

1. Give students each a copy of the quiz, or complete it together as a class.
2. Share the correct answers:
 - 1) c
 - 2) b (This does not include injury or disability.)
 - 3) c
 - 4) a
 - 5) b
 - 6) c (Only 10% of people killed in war are active participants in war.)
3. Discuss people's reactions to the correct answers. How did the truth make you feel?



ACTION DISCUSSION and SUMMARY DRAWING

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Purpose:

This activity helps to inform students about the possibility of involvement and to raise awareness.

Materials Needed:

Copies of cool websites to visit (in Appendix D).

Time:

5-15 minutes

Instructions:

1. Discuss or brainstorm as a class specific actions that people can take to raise awareness or get involved. If some of the students in the class, or the presentors, are already involved in action projects, give them the opportunity to explain their involvement.

Here are some ideas:

- Get informed!
 - Help spread awareness about war-affected children – hold a workshop, invite a guest speaker to your school
 - Start a petitions
 - Fundraising events for various organizations and causes
 - Raise money and awareness by putting on a benefit concert for war-affected children at your school
 - Volunteer for an organization that helps war-affected children
 - Once you're informed, write a letter to your MP on Canada's involvement
2. Distribute copies of cool websites to visit, or go through them together as a class.

Summary Drawing Activity

(5 minutes) As explained in previous instructions for the Drawing Activity, ask students to take out their pictures and discuss whether there are additional items they would like to add to their list. If the workshop has been effective, you'll find that students begin to see more emotional and less material associations to the topic of war.

For more information about this or other workshops, please contact us at www.tgmaq.ca or at tgmaq@tgmaq.ca.

Scenarios – Appendix A

Your name is Miko. You live in Cambodia. One day, while playing in your family's garden, you step on a landmine. You lose your left leg. There is a landmine somewhere in the world for every eight children.

Your name is Christine. You live in Sudan. You're thirteen years old. You were abducted from your home and now you're a prostitute. You're also pregnant. Young girls are often the worst victims of war. They are forced to be soldiers' wives, slaves, and/or cooks.

Your name is Carlos. You live in Columbia. You are ten years old. You were abducted from your home and now you are a child soldier. Young boys as young as six years old are known to be armed soldiers.

Appendix B – Narrative Text

You were awakened at 5:37 this morning by the sound of a gunshot. You instinctively turned the radio on to hear the latest report. A bomb had gone off near your local cultural centre. There were five casualties: two adults...and three children. Do you know these people? Were they your neighbours? At 7:25 you leave for school, you don't want to go for fear of coming home to a deserted house. As you walk to school, you spot the body of a young man in a back alley. You are afraid...a close friend was recently raped and another had been enlisted.

It's difficult to concentrate during class. How do you know that your school is safe? You think of the three dead children. Few teachers and fewer students are showing up and you decide to rush home before last period. You stop dead in front of your house. Your windows are broken and vicious graffiti is spread out on the walls. As you walk in, you hear the sobs of your mother. You find her bruised and bloody body on the floor. Through her wailing you understand that your father has been arrested. You've heard stories about the prisons but hope that they weren't true. You also know that your mother has been raped although you won't admit it to yourself. That evening, your mother packs small bags for you and your siblings; you are being sent to live with distant relatives. She is staying to wait for your father. Now you can only pray that they will survive.

Appendix C – The Quiz

1. How many landmines are still burning in the 10 main affected countries (Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, Columbia, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Guatamala)?
 - a) 100,000
 - b) 1 million
 - c) More than 1 million

2. How many children are killed by landmines each month?
 - a) 1,000
 - b) 800
 - c) 500

3. How many children have been killed in the last 10 years as a result of wars and armed conflict?
 - a) 2.5 million
 - b) 1 million
 - c) 2 million

4. How many children under 18 are currently taking part in hostilities around the world (i.e. child soldiers)?
 - a) 300,000
 - b) 200,000
 - c) 100,000

5. How much money (in US\$) does the world spend every year on the military?
 - a) 420 billion
 - b) 740 billion
 - c) 230 billion

6. What percentage of people killed in war are civilians?
 - a) 60 %
 - b) 75 %
 - c) 90 %

Cool Websites – Appendix D

Taking Action! Places to Start

Here's some websites that we found that are a good source of information and ideas on actions that you can take.

War Affected Children

www.waraffectedchildren.gc.ca

- This website provides information, multimedia features and interactive elements on the events leading up to and including the International Conference on War-affected Children. See what national and international actions are being taken to address the issues.

Oxfam: Get Involved

www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved.html

- As well as actions you can take on-line now, there are opportunities to get involved with Oxfam as a volunteer. This site provides information you need to take part in upcoming campaign and fundraising events.

Students Against Landmines

www.cyberfair.gsn.org

- An interactive Web site created by students to help other students learn about issues surrounding anti-personnel landmine.

UNICEF – Voices of Youth

www.unicef.org/voy

- Take part in an electronic discussion about the future of youth.

War Child

www.warchild.ca

- Besides information on the organization and its humanitarian activities including War Child's fundraising concerts, public appeals, and other entertainment events.

Amnesty

www.amnesty.ca

- Work for human rights on an ongoing basis by becoming part of the world's largest rights organization.