

ACTIVE CITIZENS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES



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ONTARIO JUSTICE EDUCATION NETWORK (OJEN)

The Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN) is a charitable organization dedicated to promoting public understanding, education and dialogue to support a responsive and inclusive justice system. OJEN's programs bring together leading justice and education sector representatives to collaborate on initiatives designed to foster understanding of the justice system. As a result of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers including judges, justices of the peace, lawyers, court staff, educators and community representatives, OJEN is able to facilitate public legal education opportunities for youth throughout Ontario. All of OJEN's classroom resources are available for free in French and English. To find out more about OJEN's programs and resources, visit www.ojen.ca.

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

WHAT IS ACTIVE CITIZENS?

Active Citizens has been designed for youth audiences to enhance engagement on social justice issues. By completing the Active Citizens material, participants will discuss and complete activities related to citizenship and civil disobedience, legal tools for social change, and youth-driven action. Active Citizens can be used with any youth audience, including high school academic and workplace classrooms, special needs classrooms, newcomer populations, and expelled and incarcerated youth groups. Active Citizens can also be adapted to meet the curriculum expectations in a wide range of high school courses – not only Law and Civics.

This resource package is a compilation of activities. Each activity can be used as a comprehensive lesson plan and includes: instructions about preparation and delivery of the activity; a list of required materials; the anticipated length of the activity; discussion questions to introduce a topic to youth and assess their prior knowledge; and student handouts. A variety of evaluation tools can be found on OJEN's website. For suggestions about how to connect Active Citizens to a specific class or workshop, please contact OJEN's office at 416-947-5273.

Young people will benefit from participating in this program by:

- * Taking the time to think about the social issues that concern them
- * Learning how they can use the law and their own advocacy skills to make a change
- * Networking with people in their community who work in law and social justice and getting inspired
- * Developing project management skills
- * Becoming Active Citizens!!!!!!!!

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The key to this program is that it can be customized in many ways, particularly in terms of length, focus and the final products that the youth produce.

All of the activities in this resource are related and when they are all delivered together, the program culminates in the youth preparing, researching and implementing a social action plan. When time permits, this is the recommended and most complete version of Active Citizens. The culminating activity also provides students with the possibility of presenting their action plans creatively in a variety of formats – posters, videos, photography, voice recordings (ex: public service announcements, radio segments), illustrations (ex: graphic novel), etc.

However, the activities in this handbook do not need to be delivered all together. Each activity can be completed independently or combined with others to produce a program of a specific length and focus. For example, activities 1, 2 & 3 can be combined to create a program that takes approximately three hours to complete and focuses on discussions about how laws and legal action can be used as tools for change.

Please visit OJEN's website for a selection of agendas, providing different combinations of the activities in this resource.

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES...

When Active Citizens has been delivered in the past, youth have:

- **On the Air – Radio Project:**
Recorded and broadcasted radio segments about legal issues that affect the everyday lives of youth in their community
- **Youth Voice - Research Journal**
Conducted research to improve knowledge and access to rights for other youth. Their findings were published in the Youth Voice Journal.
- **School Conference**
Received a United Way grant to host a day-long school event that addressed high drop-out rates. The school conference for students featured career workshops with professionals, team building activities, and entertainment-based sessions with positive role models.
- **Great Debate**
Presented at the annual Great Debate event at the Law Society of Upper Canada during Law Week. Every year, participants have advocated to judges and lawyers about social justice and legal reform.

ACTIVITY ONE: GETTING STARTED

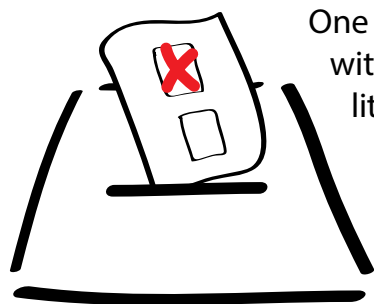
Preparation: Allow program material to be accessed online as an individual exercise or download program material as a group exercise from ojen.ca. Consider implementing facilitator tips.

Materials: Active Citizens Youth Survey or Active Citizens Icebreaker Exercise

Duration: 25-30 minutes

INTRODUCTION

Being an Active Citizen involves more than getting a passport and voting. Citizens have duties and rights that affect us every day in our interactions with each other and with the government. Being Active Citizens means contributing to our society in many little ways on a daily basis, as well as at the voting booth.



One of the most important roles of an Active Citizen is to engage with the issues around them. Take the example of increased litter. An Active Citizen doesn't simply look at the garbage piling up in their neighbourhood and walk past it. An Active Citizen takes action to impact the issue –they do something. It is the “something”, whatever that is, that makes them an Active Citizen. For example they may call their local MP and make a complaint, organize a cleanup, look into how to get more garbage and recycling bins or write a story for the local newspaper to increase awareness of the issue.

Change happens in many different ways; the law is a tool for change, but so is active citizenship. If we want to benefit from our communities by making them stronger and vibrant, we cannot simply leave it up to others. We must be Active Citizens. Observing the people around you, learning about how things work and asking questions when systems don't make sense to you are legitimate ways of starting your active citizenship. It is easy to look at an issue when it affects you. A more challenging task is to consider issues that may affect others but are important to the general well being your community. This is not an easy process. Active citizenship requires asking hard questions, advocating alternatives and challenging others and ourselves to do things differently. An even more difficult step can be deciding what action is required to make positive and lasting social change. Participants who complete this handbook to investigate the issues around them build their advocacy skills and implement their own Active Citizens' initiative.

*You must be the change you
want to see in the world.*

- Mahatma Gandhi

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does citizenship mean to you?
2. How does citizenship impact our lives?
3. What are the responsibilities or duties of citizens?
4. Are these responsibilities or duties different for adults and youth? Explain.
5. This Active Citizens program aims to build social awareness and inspire youth to do more than just meet the basic responsibilities of citizenship. What are people around you doing to improve the community?

Exercise: Active Citizens Youth Survey

The introduction is used to inspire youth, invite open dialogue, and encourage critical thinking. It is available as an online survey that youth can complete independently or as an interactive group exercise. Access the Active Citizens Youth Survey or Active Citizens Icebreaker Exercise online at ojen.ca.

To complete this as an icebreaker exercise – such as a value statement line or a four corners activity – each question is rephrased as statements and read one at a time to the youth. In a value statement line activity, youth participants stand shoulder to shoulder facing the facilitator, and take one step forward when they agree with the facilitator’s statement. Youth participants remain in line if they disagree with the facilitator’s statement. In a four corners activity, youth participants indicate that they strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree by going to one of the four pre-assigned corners in response to each facilitator statement.

THE ACTIVE CITIZENS YOUTH SURVEY AS A VALUE STATEMENT LINE EXERCISE

Facilitator: “Students, step forward if you read a newspaper on a daily basis”

Participants: Each student who reads a newspaper daily will step forward

Facilitators may choose to allow a brief discussion after each question, particularly for those questions which seem to incite debate among participants. For instance:

Facilitator: “A security guard or police officer should have the right to search your luggage before you board a plane”

Participants: Each student who feels a security guard or police officer should have the right to search luggage before passengers aboard a plane will step forward

Facilitator: "A security guard or police officer should have the right to search your bags before you enter school"

Participants: Each student who feels a security guard or police officer should have the right to search bags before students enter school will step forward

Discussion Question

Facilitator: How is it different for a security guard or police officer at an airport than at a school? If you stepped forward for one but not the other, please explain!

This adapted version of the Active Citizens online youth survey is provided for facilitators on our website.

See 'Active Citizens Icebreaker'

FACILITATOR TIP

Consider showing a contemporary social justice video to youth participants here. Find a short video which addresses activism, youth engagement, or an emerging community issue. A good source for this may be social media feeds, news websites, or something you find in the next facilitators tip!

FACILITATOR TIP

Search, share, and discuss other youth-driven initiatives. Jer's Vision, The Ladybug Foundation, and Free the Children are good examples of youth creating positive and lasting contributions in Canadian communities.

ACTIVITY TWO: TOOLS FOR CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a part of Canada’s Constitution. The constitution of a society is an assortment of important rules, principles and practices relating to the governance of that society. In the 1929 case *Edwards v AG Canada*, commonly known as the *Persons’ Case*, Lord Sanky referred to the Canadian Constitution as a “living tree capable of growth and expansion within its natural limits.” This means that the Canadian Constitution, including the Charter is always evolving and must be interpreted progressively to adapt and match how Canadian society changes over time. This is known as the living tree doctrine. The living tree doctrine recognizes that as society changes, what becomes acceptable also changes; something that was not legal in the past could be legal now. Can you think of something that used to be illegal but is legal now? What about something that is illegal now, but may be legal in the future?

Laws change as society changes, but law is also a tool for social change. Lawyers use the legal framework, combined with their advocacy skills to challenge how laws are interpreted and applied in courts. This is known as litigation. When the court makes a decision by applying the law to the facts of the case and making a ruling, this ruling becomes law as well – it is known as common law.

Individuals also use advocacy skills to convince their community and elected representatives (members of parliament and members of provincial parliament) that change should take place. Anyone can be a great advocate, including young people. Advocacy skills allow people to build momentum in social justice initiatives to influence others and effect change. Ultimately advocacy in social justice can result in policy, decision makers or other stakeholders changing their approach or position and possibly even creating a new law or policy. This is another way laws are made in Canada, through the legislature.

Did you know...

In July 2012, Advocates in Ontario’s legislature passed a new law to protect transgender people. Bill 33, *Toby’s Act (Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression)* amended the Ontario Human Rights Code to protect persons on these grounds.

I. LEGAL ACTION

Preparation: Download activity materials from ojen.ca; Consider facilitator tips

Materials: Cases That Have Changed Society; Canada's Next Top Law

Duration: 1-2 Hours

This section encourages youth participants to examine how legal action can be used to protect equality and fairness within Canadian Society. Participants examine the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, review cases that have changed our society, and propose Canada's Next Top Law.

FACILITATOR TIP

This may be a good opportunity to provide background information on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and basic legal processes. You know your audience, choose accordingly!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to the Charter, what are the rights and freedoms of Canadian Citizens?
2. Which Charter right do you value the most?
3. How has the Charter of Rights and Freedoms had a direct impact on your life?
4. Do you think the Charter has changed Canadian society in the last 25 years?
5. Who do you think should be responsible for protecting the rights of Canadians?
6. Sometimes people deliberately break the law as a form of protest against unjust rules. This is known as civil disobedience. Can you think of an example of civil disobedience?
7. Do you think it is acceptable for citizens to break the law in order to protect their rights, to secure fairness and equality? Explain.

Exercise One: **Tools for Change: Cases That Have Changed Society**

One method to implement change is through the legal system. Many cases are started by individuals or groups who have responded to a particular event or who wish to change a situation. The outcomes of these cases will often lead to changes in certain areas of the law which impact all Canadians. Tools for Change: Cases that have Changed Society reviews nine cases that have effectively changed Canadian society in the last 25 years. Allow 10-15 minutes for small groups to complete this exercise.

Exercise Two: **Canada's Next Top Law**

For an additional culminating exercise, participants respond to the issues they are most passionate about by proposing legal reform. If participants need help identifying a single issue, have them complete 'Handout: Narrow the Issue' before this exercise begins. This exercise is designed to encourage participants to think about the legislative process in Canada and the balance between individual rights and community interests. Allow 1-2 hours for small groups to complete this exercise.

FACILITATOR TIP

Have a proposal worth sharing? Read about the Great Debate on pg. 27. It is a formal event during Law Week where youth are invited to share their ideas with justice and educator sector representatives.

Did you know...

Donald Marshall Jr., a Mi'kmaq Indian, was charged with selling eels without a license, fishing without a license, and fishing during the close season with illegal nets. He took his case to the Supreme Court of Canada and won!

II. LEGAL ADVOCACY SKILLS

Preparation: Photocopy activity materials from Active Citizens User Guide

Materials: Handout: Applying your Advocacy Skills

Duration: 1-2 hours

In this section, youth participants build advocacy skills to enhance awareness and to develop an unbiased perspective. Participants examine how these legal advocacy skills allow individuals to resolve conflicts and influence change. Participants use twelve advocacy skills to evaluate two community issues – one from their own community and one authentic scenario titled Huge Slice Pizza.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does advocacy mean?
2. Have you advocated for yourself or for others? Explain
3. How have others advocated in your school or community? Explain

Exercise One: Identifying Advocacy Skills

Brainstorm the qualities of an effective advocate. Participants outline five essential skills an effective advocate must possess. See how these compare to the list of advocacy skills provided. Be prepared to add one new skill to 'Handout: Applying Your Advocacy Skills' on the next page. Allow 5-10 minutes for small groups to complete this exercise.

Exercise Two: Applying your Advocacy Skills

Apply advocacy skills to examine two scenarios. The first scenario, titled Huge Slice Pizza, is provided. Identify a situation from your own community and use it as the other scenario. Using 'Handout: Applying Your Advocacy Skills' on the next page, participants answer the questions in the advocacy skills column for both scenarios. Allow 45-60 minutes for small groups to complete this exercise.

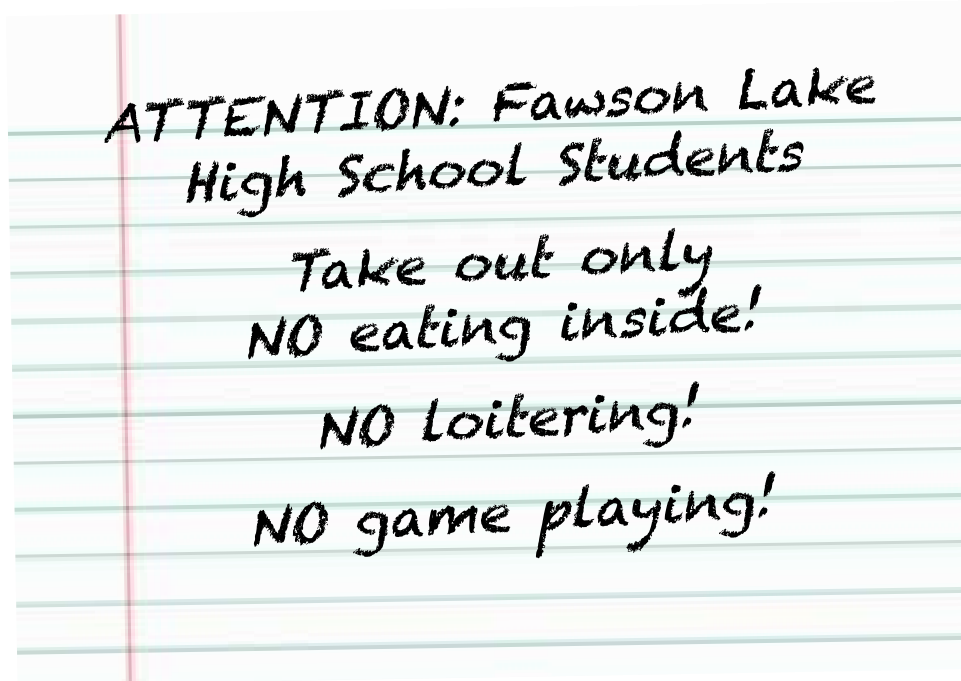
ADVOCACY SKILLS

- » Consider all Perspectives
- » Listen
- » Find Evidence
- » Talk to Experts
- » Look for Bias
- » Evaluate Sources
- » Empathize with Others
- » Be Curious
- » Take Responsibility
- » Give Reasons
- » Acknowledge Mistakes
- » Accept Uncertainty

Huge Slice Pizza Scenario

Mathis, the owner of Huge Slice Pizza, had a problem: the pizza store is so busy at lunch he's concerned about overcrowding and fire violations. There have also been a couple fights. Many students from Fawson Lake High School, located next door, eat at Huge Slice.

Mathis posts a sign that says:



Ameena, Han and Marcel are students at Fawson. They eat at Huge Slice almost every day along with many of their classmates. Han's neighbour recently commented about how he would not be sending his daughter to Fawson because the kids were so rowdy and rude that they were banned from Huge Slice Pizza. Ameena, Han and Marcel think the sign discriminates against Fawson's students and want Mathis to take it down.

FACILITATOR TIP

Consider discussing this scenario in depth before moving onto the next page. Q. What is the problem with this sign? Q. Is the sign illegal? Q. Is this discrimination? Q. Have you experienced something like this?



HANDOUT: APPLYING YOUR ADVOCACY SKILLS

ADVOCACY SKILL	HUGE SLICE PIZZA SCENARIO	YOUR SCENARIO
<p>Consider All Perspectives Consider all the different angles in this scenario. How would this situation look from each perspective?</p>		
<p>Listen There is always more to a situation than we first think. What exactly is being said in this situation?</p>		
<p>Find Evidence Gather all the information you need before making a decision. What evidence exists in this scenario?</p>		
<p>Talk to Experts Experts can help us to understand problems more clearly. Which experts might help you in this scenario?</p>		
<p>Look for Bias If an individual is invested in a particular outcome, it may be hard to keep an open mind. Does anyone in this scenario have a vested interest in a particular outcome?</p>		
<p>Evaluate Sources How reliable is the source of information in this scenario? What concerns might you have based on these sources?</p>		
<p>Empathize with Others No matter how committed you are, someone may disagree with you. How can you compromise with others in this scenario?</p>		
<p>Be Curious Consider new possibilities. What creative solutions would make everyone happy?</p>		
<p>Take Responsibility Once you are involved in the discussion, you are impacting the issue. What is your responsibility in this scenario?</p>		
<p>Give Reasons Earn the respect of others by explaining why you have an interest in this scenario. How are you invested to finding a positive solution in this matter?</p>		
<p>Acknowledge Mistakes Obtaining new facts may change our opinion for the better. What new information would change your perspective in this scenario?</p>		
<p>Accept Uncertainty You might not know how the story will unfold but keep looking. What are all the possible outcomes and how can you prepare for each one?</p>		

ACTIVITY THREE: BUILDING AN ACTIVE CITIZENS NETWORK

Preparation: Photocopy activity materials from Active Citizens User Guide

Materials: Handout: Building an Active Citizens Network

Duration: 1-2 Hours

INTRODUCTION

In this section, youth participants build an Active Citizens support network which will allow them to meet inspiring community leaders, learn about different community initiatives, and gain a new perspective. Contact OJEN to meet justice sector representatives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who are the leaders in your community?
2. What makes that person a community leader?
3. What characteristics or skills do these individuals possess?
4. How does it help you to network with community leaders? Explain.
5. What can you do to expand your network?

Did you know...

David Lepofsky has been an active community leader who has advocated for new laws to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in Canada. In 1994, he campaigned to get the Toronto Transit Committee (TTC) to announce all subway stops, and later all bus stops, for the benefit of passengers with vision loss. As a result, the Human Rights Tribunal ordered the TTC to consistently announce all subway stops in 2005 and all bus and streetcar stops in 2007.

Exercise: Building an Active Citizens Network

There are many experts addressing issues that affect people in your community, across the country, and internationally. These leaders all have different strengths and different ambitions, yet they are each determined to make a positive and lasting impact.

One way to become informed on an issue is to reach out and network with these experts. Building an Active Citizens network with community leaders will give participants a new perspective and possibly increase their resources. This can ultimately help them to achieve their project goals. Have participants complete 'Handout: Building an Active Citizens Network'. Allow 1-2 hours for participants to recruit and meet with community leader(s).



1. Identify three local leaders or organizations

Invite a guest speaker to discuss community initiatives and social engagement with you and your peers.

2. Prepare a script

Be ready before contacting the guest speaker. Prepare a script which includes your name, where you are calling from and the reason you are calling.

3. Make the call

Contact the community leader or organization from a quiet location, have a pen and paper to take notes, and be prepared to leave a brief message.

4. Prepare a list of questions

Consider the topics and questions you want answered ahead of the presentation date. It will be a wasted opportunity if you are uninformed and unprepared when the speaker arrives. Below are some suggestions. Add 3-5 questions of your own to each category.

GUEST SPEAKER INVITATION #1

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Why? _____

GUEST SPEAKER INVITATION #2

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Why? _____

CONFIRMED GUEST SPEAKER

Name: _____

Date of visit: _____

Time of of visit: _____

Location of visit: _____

GUEST SPEAKER QUESTIONS

Professional Questions:

Where do you work, what is your job title?

What skills and qualifications are required for this position?

Is your work related to your community interest/ concerns?

Community, Advocacy or Legal Questions:

How did you become interested in this issue?

What would you like to see done about this issue?

What are some barriers you face?

Advice for Active Citizenship:

How could youth get involved in your issue?

What advice would you have for youth?

STUDENT QUESTIONS

Professional Questions:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Community, Advocacy or Legal Questions:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Advice for Active Citizenship:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

ACTIVITY FOUR: NARROW THE ISSUE

Preparation: Photocopy activity material from Active Citizens User Guide

Materials: Narrow the Issue Chart

Duration: 30-60 Minutes

In this section, participants begin to focus on the social justice issues affecting their community. With so many social justice issues in the world commanding our attention, this can become an overwhelming task. As participants identify the single issue they are most passionate about, they will begin to gather the facts and develop a response plan during subsequent activities.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is social justice?
2. How do ordinary citizens contribute to society?
3. List some examples of what people are doing in your school or community to improve it?

Exercise: **Narrow the Issue Chart**

Narrowing the issue is an important step in most legal processes. Lawyers educate themselves and investigate matters in a concise and definitive manner in order to produce exact, creative, and lasting solutions. For this exercise, participants work in small groups to examine the issues impacting the people around them. After identifying a singular issue of concern, the small groups may remain together for the balance of the Active Citizens material. Allow 20-35 minutes to complete this exercise.

FACILITATOR TIP

Some audiences may require background information or assistance before moving from the discussion questions to the exercise. If so, it may be appropriate to start the Handout: Narrow the Issue together.

Look at the world around you – What concerns do you have? Identify social justice concerns for each topic below!

SCHOOL & EDUCATION

» *Rising tuition expenses*

»

»

»

HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUITY

» *Rights for the disabled*

»

»

»



GOVERNANCE

» *Foreign policy*

»

»

»

LAW & ORDER

» *Cyber crime*

»

»

»

YOUTH ISSUES

» *Child poverty*

»

»

»



**IS ANYTHING ELSE
AFFECTING PEOPLE IN
YOUR COMMUNITY?**

»

»

»

»

Of those identified above, which issue are you most passionate about?

ACTIVITY FIVE: FIND THE FACTS

Preparation: Complete Narrow the Issue Chart or identify one social justice topic to research

Materials: KWL chart; Online access

Duration: 60 Minutes

INTRODUCTION

In this section, participants get informed on the issues that matter most to them. Participants are to become experts by examining what others are doing to address the issue – reach out to community leaders, read about it, and search the function of the law. This activity does not include introductory discussion questions and is a continuation of the small group work completed in Activity Three.

Exercise One: **KWL Chart**

Have small groups begin to find facts by completing a KWL chart.

TOPIC:		
What do you KNOW about this topic?	What do you WANT to know about this topic?	What have you LEARNED about this topic?

Exercise Two: **Find the Facts**

1. Who is impacted by this issue (consider: age groups, cultures, religions)?
2. How are these people impacted?
3. Has this issue been addressed by the news media?
4. Has this issue received much attention in social media?
5. How have government officials and political representatives been involved?
6. Find community organizations and initiatives related to this issue

Exercise Three: Investigate how the law is a Tool for Change

What is the function of the law and how has it impacted each topic? These websites will help the participants to find legal information regarding each topic.

Canadian Legal Information Institute

www.canlii.org

Canadian law accessible online for free

Service Ontario

www.ontario.ca

Search e-laws under Law and Safety to access provincial statutes and regulations

Justice for Children and Youth

www.jfcy.org

Provides legal representation to children and youth in the Toronto region

Canadian Civil Liberties Association

www.ccla.org

Promotes respect and observance of fundamental human rights and civil liberties

Women's Legal Education and Action Fund

www.leaf.ca

National organization focusing on the equality rights of women and girls under the law

National Association of Women and the Law

www.nawl.ca

Promotes Canadian women's equality through action, legal research, and education

ACTIVITY SIX: TAKE ACTION

Preparation: photocopy activity materials from Active Citizens User Guide (3x documents)

Materials: Handout: Building a Project Proposal, Handout: Your Active Citizens Project Proposal, Handout: Active Citizens Action Planner

Duration: 1-3 Hours

INTRODUCTION

Every great social justice movement started with an idea and a plan. As Benjamin Franklin said “by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” To take action you must be able to identify your issue and goals, and develop an appropriate plan to take action. By completing this activity, participants build a project proposal with the ultimate goal of impacting the social justice issue they are most passionate about.

Take Action is the culminating activity for Active Citizens. Participants should be encouraged to share their achievements using the Stay Active exercises and OJEN’s annual law week program titled, The Great Debate. This program highlights proposals young people have made while engaged in OJEN programs about legal reform, ideas on active citizenship, or experience with the justice system.

STEPS TO TAKE ACTION!

- » Volunteer to help with a project your student council is running
- » Organize a fundraiser at your community association
- » Start a Active Citizens club in your school
- » Join an agency working on an issue you care about
- » Sign up for the newsletter of an organization you care about
- » Attend a town hall session and offer a youth perspective
- » Watch question period at city hall or at your provincial legislature
- » Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper
- » Research an issue you care about and create a blog post about your opinion
- » Call your MPP, MP or City Councillor to discuss the topic of concern
- » Repost an informative article on Facebook or Twitter, with your own comments, to raise awareness about your community topic
- » Bring rights awareness posters (from a local legal aid clinic or government office) to your school to educate your peers
- » Volunteer in an election, either with a political party or with the elections office
- » Start an online petition through social networking sites. Send it to your elected officials
- » Learn about a conflict between a local First Nation and the government (e.g. resource use, roadblock, funding issues). Research the treaty right at issue



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What can ordinary citizens do to engage in their community?
2. Review OJENs 'Steps to Take Action'. What other action is available to ordinary citizens to create lasting change?

Exercise One: Building a Project Proposal

Before taking action, look at the big picture. What is the topic and what is the goal that they hope to achieve? Participants should create a project in their school or community that will address that goal. The following examples were identified by students in previous Active Citizen workshops. Share these examples with your participants and discuss how these student projects are creative and effectively address the big picture issue. Have participants submit three project ideas in Handout: Building a Project Proposal. Allow 15-25 minutes for small groups to complete this exercise.

ISSUE		GOAL		PROJECT
Homelessness	>	Reduce homelessness	>	Collect clothes, food fundraiser BBQ
Child labour	>	Raise awareness of where our clothes come from and child labour issues	>	'No jeans' day at school
Discrimination	>	Promote acceptance, unity	>	Have a poster campaign and information booths at school

Exercise Two: Selecting a Project Proposal to Implement

Participants take a moment to consider the advantages and disadvantages of these projects. What would it take to implement each project? Think about the costs, supplies, locations, dates, and assistance they will need. Some project ideas may be creative, engaging, and help to achieve their goal, but the costs and required resources may be unreasonable. In contrast, some project ideas may be affordable and practical, but lack originality and fail to create a positive and lasting impact. Encourage participants to find a balance by considering the advantages and disadvantages of each project.

FACILITATOR TIP

Interested in OJENs Creative Challenge?
Need Peer Evaluations and Student Rubrics?
Visit ojen.ca.

After evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each project idea, participants will determine which project is most achievable. As a group, decide which action plan effectively addresses their issue, achieves the project goal, and is reasonable to implement. Allow 10-15 minutes for groups to complete this exercise.

Exercise Three: Active Citizens Project Outline

Now take the project proposal one step further – plan it out! Participants summarize the details of their selected project proposal. Allow 10-15 minutes for small groups to complete this exercise.

FACILITATOR TIP

Allow each group to present their Active Citizens Action Project Outline to facilitators and peers. Access the Active Citizens Peer Evaluation form at ojen.ca. Consider implementing the most effective proposal as a larger group!

Exercise Four: Active Citizens Action Planner

In this exercise, participants turn project outlines into a complete inventory of project responsibilities. Use 'Handout: Active Citizens Action Planner' to outline every task required to successfully implement their Active Citizens Project. This should include all the steps involved in the preparation, implementation, and conclusion of the project. As a facilitator, encourage participants to recognize the finer details of the larger tasks. For instance, to reserve space at a school, participants may have to schedule a meeting with a principal, submit an application form, sign waiver forms and ensure appropriate clean up procedures are in place. Through this exercise, groups are expected to identify each task, assign duties to group members, and impose deadlines. Allow 45-60 minutes for groups to complete the exercise.



ISSUE

What topic are you most concerned about?

GOAL

What would you like to change about this topic?

PROJECT

What projects would help to address this issue and to create the desired change? For instance, organize an event or workshop, or create a campaign to raise awareness or funds. List 3 possible projects that may help you to accomplish your goal.

Project idea #1

Project idea #2

Project idea #3

What would it take to implement each project? Think about the costs, supplies, location, dates, and assistance you will need to put into operation each project idea. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of your three project ideas.

PROJECT ACTION PLAN	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Idea #1	» » »	» » »
Idea #2	» » »	» » »
Idea #3	» » »	» » »



After evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each project idea, decide which project is most achievable. Now as a group take your project idea one step further – plan it out.

MY ACTIVE CITIZENS PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Issue:

Goal:

Supplies:

Type of Location:

Costs:

Possible Help:

Possible Donations:

Promotion (media, school, school board):

Timeline:

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

HANDOUT: ACTIVE CITIZENS PROJECT OUTLINE

Share proposals - Determine which one to implement together!

Visit ojen.ca for Peer Evaluation forms

CONCLUSION: STAY ACTIVE!

Preparation: Consider facilitator tip

Materials: Not Applicable

Duration: 15-30 Minutes

In this final section, participants are challenged to remain Active Citizens. Allow participants to evaluate their experiences and reflect on the learning process.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you learn about your social justice issue and your community during this experience?
2. What did you learn about active citizenship, advocacy and legal action?
3. Did you develop and complete an Active Citizens Action Plan?
4. If so, what were the most rewarding aspects from this experience?
5. If so, what unexpected challenges did you face during this experience? How did your group respond to these problems?
6. How can you apply your Active Citizens knowledge and skills to your community now? Are there other social justice issues you would like to address?
7. What else can you do to maintain your Active Citizenship?

FACILITATOR TIP

At the completion of the program, facilitators may access assessment rubrics, program evaluation forms, and Active Citizens Certificates. Visit ojen.ca.

Exercise: **Inspire others, share your experiences on Facebook!**

1. Upload your Active Citizens photos, videos, and event links
2. See what other Active Citizens Projects are taking place in Ontario
3. Connect with OJEN representatives to see how you can get involved! Volunteer opportunities are available.

THE GREAT DEBATE

Every year, the Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN) and the Law Society of Upper Canada present the Great Debate during Law Week in April. It is an event where lawyers, educators and students meet to discuss the issues affecting Canadians.

Next April, the Great Debate will highlight the positive and lasting contributions youth have made through the Active Citizens program. It is free of charge but spaces are limited. If you feel your youth participants have demonstrated active citizenship in your community and would like to share their experiences, please contact us at info@ojen.ca.



