

Express Yourself!

Young People Promoting Human Rights in Ireland

6-Step Students' Guide to a CSPE Human Rights Action Project and Exhibition

Acknowledgments

***Express Yourself!* Advisory Group**

The IHRC would like to sincerely thank the Advisory Group for its very valuable input and support:

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By

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The Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC) was established under statute in 2000 to promote and protect the human rights of everyone in Ireland. Human rights are the basic standards that we are all entitled to by virtue of being human. The human rights that the IHRC is mandated to promote and protect are the rights, liberties and freedoms guaranteed under the Irish Constitution and in the many international agreements, treaties and conventions to which Ireland is a party.

Introduction

The Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC) promotes education that strengthens human rights as knowing about human rights is the first step towards protecting them. This is a Guide to support students like you who want to highlight human rights in Ireland through their Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) Action Projects. It comes with an invitation to you to produce an image for exhibition by the IHRC that brings human rights to life. In CSPE exploring human rights gives students the chance to actively participate in creating a culture of respect for human rights in their school community and in society. Building on this, the IHRC would like to promote greater awareness and understanding of human rights in Ireland and the role young citizens can play in promoting and defending them.

Express Yourself! Young People Promoting Human Rights in Ireland is being organised by the IHRC in collaboration with the Association of CSPE Teachers (ACT); the Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU); the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST); and the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD).

Approach

The IHRC is inviting CSPE students, you, to give expression to a human rights issue in Ireland that concerns you by:

- Getting a better understanding of a human rights issues in Ireland;
- Making human rights in Ireland the focus of your Action Projects with an image
- Creating *Express Yourself!* images through group effort that keenly shows your concern about a human rights (the image could be a poster, a graphic, street art, an advertisement); and thus;
- Giving concrete expression and support to your views on human rights;
- Clearly showing, through the text that you send with the image, that the process was co-operative, participatory and democratic;
- With your groups/class, organising an event on International Human Rights Day (10 December 2012) to display your images at your school and so promoting awareness about human rights issues in Ireland.

Note!

The closing date for submission of images to exhibition is **Wednesday 16 January 2013**. The *Express Yourself!* Exhibition will open on **27 February 2013** for one week at the Lighthouse Cinema, Smithfield, Dublin 7.

Step by Step Guide

We understand that students take the lead in CSPE Action Projects and that there are many different ways of taking action on an issue, however the IHRC has produced this simple **Six-Step Guide** to give students some ideas and guidance for this project *Express Yourself!*

We hope that by doing this project you will see the value of human rights and why they should be protected. We really want to encourage and support you to make human rights the focus of your Action Projects. We are **inviting you** to create images that can promote human rights to a wider audience and be part of the IHRC's national exhibition.

We want you to

- have a greater understanding about human rights in Ireland;
- challenge attitudes and perceptions;
- develop a set of skills to take action to promote and defend human rights;
- increase awareness within the school community through visual image;
- use visual image to increase awareness nationally of the power of CSPE students to promote human rights

6 Steps

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| Step 1 | Exploring and Understanding Human Rights |
| Step 2 | Choosing a Human Rights Action Project Theme |
| Step 3 | Planning the Human Rights Action Project |
| Step 4 | Executing the Human Rights Action Project |
| Step 5 | Preparing the Express Yourself! Image for Display |
| Step 6 | Review and Reflection |

Note!

The criteria for selection to the National Exhibition are set out in Step 5. Full details of the selection process will be provided on the application guidelines and form available on the IHRC's website www.ihrc.ie/cspe

Some Useful Resources

- Your textbook
- Your teacher
- The IHRC website has a range of resources to help you. www.ihrc.ie/cspe or email: expressyourself@ihrc.ie
- *A Human Rights Action Project*, Curriculum Development Unit, CDVEC, 1999. Available on www.ihrc.ie/cspe
- *A *is for Action CSPE, Action Project Resource*, Amnesty International, 2011. See www.amnesty.ie/human-rights-education
- *Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, CSPE Resource Pack, Amnesty International, 2008. See www.amnesty.ie/human-rights-education
- *What Do You Say?* Resource Pack for Civic, Social and Political Education, Ombudsman for Children, 2010. See www.oco.ie
- Organisations/people working in the area of human rights. Also see www.ihrc.ie/cspe

Step 1 Exploring and Understanding Human Rights

Learning Outcomes

- Build an understanding of human rights from your experience and interests.
- Greater grasp of the range of human rights issues in Ireland.
- Empathise with people who are denied their rights.
- More knowledge of human rights standards and methods used to protect people.

One Approach: Teacher and Students explore -

- What human rights are and how they relate to student's daily lives?
- What it would be like if and when human rights are not fulfilled?
- What organisations work on human rights issues?

Step 2 Choosing a Human Rights Action Project Theme

You are now equipped with some knowledge of human rights in Ireland and the impact on groups whose rights are not being fulfilled. Now it is time to focus on one issue that your class/group cares about and how you would like to address it through your CSPE Action Project.

Learning Outcomes

- Finding out more about human rights issues that students in your class care about.
- Deciding on a human rights issue that will become the focus of an Action Project.

One Approach: discussion and activities

- Identify human rights issue in Ireland you care about
- Reflect on how the issues selected relate to CSPE core concepts
- Reflect on how issues relates to human rights standards set out in, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Step 3 Planning a Human Rights Action Project

Now you are going to act on a human rights issue through an Action Project. You will need to discuss as a class/group which Action Project idea would be most successful in terms of its possible impact and the resources and time available to you.

You must decide what visual means you will use to let others know about your human rights issue in the school and what event you will hold to display your images and raise awareness. You should keep in mind the application criteria for the IHRC's *Express Yourself!* Exhibition (See Step 4).

Learning Outcomes

- Better research skills through investigating your human rights topic.
- Stronger skills of analysis as a result of assessing a range of material.
- Greater ability to critically discuss different ideas as part of the task of choosing an Action Project topic and aims.
- Greater ability to set goals, identify and allocate tasks, and communicate the Action Project's key messages within an agreed timeframe and resources.

One Approach

- **Research** the Human Rights Action Project topic identified in Step 2.
- **Describe or map** the range of issues, people and organisations linked to the topic.
- **critically think about and discuss** the Action Project ideas and choose one, taking into account interests in the group, skills, resources, and time.
- **Develop a plan, discuss/ brainstorm:** to identify skills within the groups, set-out tasks and agree who is responsible for each of them
- **One group** of students could consider organising the event for December 10th to celebrate Human Rights Day as their task or Human Rights Action Project: each Project team could have a person whose role would be to liaise with group.
- **Remember** that one of the Human Rights Action Project goals is to create an image that expresses what you would like to communicate to others about the issue you have chosen.

Step 4 Doing a Human Rights Action Project

The aim of this step is to help you to carry out your Human Rights Action Project and should be read with Step 5.

Learning Outcomes

- Develop a good understanding of a human rights issue.
- Build relations between the groups working on the issue.
- Develop human rights campaigning and advocacy skills.
- Develop project management and teamwork skills

One Approach

- Meet regularly to assess progress, discuss any challenges groups are facing and come up with solutions.
- Record progress as the information is useful for keeping track and for review and evaluation at the end of the project: Take short minutes of your meetings
- Each Action Project to nominate a liaison person to interact with the group organising the 10th December International Human Rights Day event.

Step 5 Preparing Human Rights Image and Display

The image you decide to use should express your concern about the human rights issue that is at the core of your Human Rights Action Project. This step will include your plan on how to organise a local event. Included here is an outline of the criteria for images to go forward for selection to be part of the *Express Yourself! Young People Promoting Human Rights in Ireland*, National Exhibition organised by the IHRC from 27 February to 6 March 2013.

Learning Outcomes

- Develop creative and artistic skills.
- Develop communications and persuasion skills.
- Develop organisational and event management skills.

One Approach

- Each Human Rights Action Project Team will work together to develop an image that best expresses the core of the human rights issue at the heart of the Project. The criteria for entry to the National Exhibition set out below should be taken into account
 - See application guidelines and form on www.ihrc.ie/cspe
- The group organising the *Express Yourself!* event at your school on International Human Rights Day, 10 December meets to plan the event, assess the resources available, identify tasks and allocate responsibilities

These are the criteria for submission to National Exhibition and you must follow each of them:

- Image can be a painting, graphic, collage, photo/montage, cartoon, illustration etc;
- Must give visual expression to human rights issue at heart of the Action Project;
- Must clearly express a message on human rights in an Irish context only (local or national);
- Must make a link to human rights standards such as those in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Must clearly communicate what you want to say to wider public about the human rights issue;
- Must be no smaller than A4 or no bigger than A2 size to facilitate framing and exhibiting;
- Must be accompanied by a 50 word caption and 100 word statement that explains the image, why it is important, how it was chosen and the group process involved;
- Must show evidence of teamwork and a democratic creative process;
- Should make a visual impact;
- Must submit images to IHRC by **Wednesday, 16 January 2013.**

Note!

A selection process may happen if the number of images received is more than space allows. Full details of the selection process will be provided in the application guidelines which can be downloaded from the IHRC website www.ihrc.ie/cspe

Step 6 Review and Reflection

It is important to review the whole Action Project process, to note its successes and challenges and to reflect on the skills you used and acquired as a result of your participation.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand better of the importance of assessing and reviewing the learning process and how the project was managed
- Have better skills to organise, review and evaluate information and processes
- Have greater personal insight

One Approach

- Compare the results against the goals, objectives and tasks set out at the beginning of the process;
- Identify the skills used and the new skills acquired by carrying out the Action Project;
- Identify your attitude to/feelings around the human rights issue you explored and to explain what new insights you got into this issue;
- Make suggestions around reasonable social/political responses or actions to the issue you have explored;
- Identify what the successes were and what you would do differently in the future.

IHRC

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