

Key Stage 2 Lesson Plan



Overview

- The content of this lesson will help deliver the school's SMSC, PHSE and RE curriculum.
- The activities are interactive and thought provoking. They challenge stereotypes, increase understanding of a problem and need in the community, and broaden the horizons of the pupils.
- Skills developed include group discussion, critical thinking and problem solving.
- The videos (Yr 5 and 6 only) are emotive, engaging and real, featuring someone who was homeless and supported by Porchlight
- This lesson has been tried and tested – delivered to thousands of young people and children in Kent.

Resources:

- Flipchart with several sheets of paper
- Plenty of markers in several colours
- Blue tac/drawing pins
- Audio-visual equipment
- Rebecca's story <https://youtu.be/OX0iF-OuZn8>
- Class room set up: small groups (6 max) and whole group

Introduction

Use the teacher notes to briefly introduce Porchlight, explain the overview of the lesson and encourage the pupils to actively participate and share their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Small group drawing activity & discussion

- Split the class into small groups of a maximum of 6 pupils
- Spend a short amount of time asking the pupils about homeless people they have seen in their own community, what they looked like, what they were doing, how they think they felt.
- Give each group one sheet of flipchart paper and several marker pens
- Explain the exercise:
 - 1) Draw a homeless person (one drawing per group)
 - 2) On the sheet, write down words they associate with homeless people (without worrying too much about being polite) eg smelly, scary, dirty, lazy
 - 3) Write down words which describe how this person must be feeling.
 - 4) Come up with a short description of 3 sentences about how this person became homeless
 - 5) Give your homeless person a first name
- Stick the drawings on the wall and discuss using the teacher notes. You can do this as a whole group or invite one member of each small groups to come and explain their drawing, with discussion supported by you.

Solutions brainstorm

For each drawing, discuss as a whole group what that individual needs in terms of services and items to be happy, healthy and independent. List them on a sheet of flipchart paper ie: food, warmth, a home, seeing a doctor, dentist, going to school, finding work, making new friends, rebuilding self-esteem. Split short term needs from long term needs and discuss the value of meeting both types of needs.

Watch the Rebecca video to show that homeless people can be women too as opposed to the likely majority of male drawings. (YEAR 5 AND 6 ONLY)

Using the teacher notes discuss how Porchlight meets these needs with an emphasis on long term solutions and thereby helps to break the cycle of homelessness.

Conclude the lesson with the message that it's great that the school is fundraising for Porchlight because it means the charity can help more people like Rebecca.

Key Stage 2 lesson teacher notes

Introduction

Porchlight is a local charity that supports vulnerable and homeless people in Kent. The charity works with people who are street homeless, provides supported accommodation and also prevents homelessness, working with children as young as 10 years old whose families may be struggling.

The aim of the lesson is to teach students about homelessness in Kent, and the different forms it can take.

Let the pupils know that the lesson is as much about their thoughts, opinions and experiences as it is about what we want them to learn. So during the lesson they can say what they think, be honest and not worry about being politically correct. If they think that homeless people are lazy, smelly or scary, it's ok for them to say so.

Small group drawing activity & discussion

Pupils sometimes need a couple of minutes to get going with this but will not want to stop once they start! The more you've reassured them during the introduction that they can be open and honest, the more comfortable they will feel and able to express themselves during this activity.

- Display all the drawings – give compliments, laugh at them, they will be laughing! Homelessness is a serious subject and it's good to keep things light now and then.
- Give each picture some attention – you can either do it one by one, or go through the individual elements: the different drawings + associated words; the feelings of the person or the causes.

- When commenting on the drawings, some of the important issues to ask/mention are:
 - Why do many homeless people have a dog? Talk about loneliness, safety, protection from abuse, violence (Include statistic - life expectancy of a male rough sleeper in the UK is 47)
 - Why are they lonely?
 - Discuss addictions and how they can be a cause, but also a symptom of homelessness
 - Explain that addiction usually arises when someone needs to find a way to escape their problems: neglect, abuse, suffering and pain
 - Does that mean it's their own fault that they have an addiction?
 - If the students mention 'depressed/crazy' people, discuss mental health issues:
 - How common they are: one in four people will deal with a mental health illness at some stage in their life
 - 80% of people we find on the streets have mental health problems, with half of those being diagnosed before they become homeless.
 - Is it their own fault that they have a mental health problem?
 - Explain how mental health problems can be addressed, just like physical health problems, but that stigma and shame stop people from getting the help they need
 - Discuss how a mental health problem may cause someone to become homeless
 - Comment on similarities between drawings – are they all male? Are they all old? Do they all have a drinking problem?
 - Causes – when talking about the causes, it's good to draw on case studies or invent scenarios, but use the names the groups have given their drawings
 - Mental health scenario – husband loses job, becomes depressed, relationship breaks down, wife and kids stay in house, husband is so depressed he's unable to find work or look after himself, evicted - homeless
 - Addictions – child has abusive parent, starts drinking to escape home life, addiction develops and grows, child leaves school without qualifications, relationships with friends and family break down due to addiction - homeless
 - Relationship breakdown – young girl's parents split up, mum gets new boyfriend, lots of arguing, mum gets pregnant, not enough rooms in the house, girl gets kicked out at 17 – homeless
- Discuss Hidden Homelessness and Sofa-surfing
 - Use the iceberg analogy: you can tell when you see rough sleepers that they are obviously homeless, but they are just the tip of the iceberg, 90% of the iceberg is underwater and hidden from view, and that 90% are the 'hidden homeless'
 - Ask the students - If you, their teacher, became homeless tomorrow, would you go straight onto the streets?
 - No, you would ask friends and relatives to put you up until your welcome runs out
 - These people are 'hidden' because you can't tell that they are homeless just by looking at them (they have somewhere to wash), but they are homeless because they don't have a permanent home
 - At some stage they will run out of doors to knock on so they still need help, as soon as possible.

Solutions

Food and short term shelter for rough sleepers are increasingly being provided by day centers and winter shelters. Often run by churches, community groups and volunteers. Porchlight signposts rough sleepers to these services so that their immediate needs are met until Porchlight finds them a more stable home.

Porchlight has “supported accommodation” which are hostels where people can live from a few months up to 2 years. People will always have their own private bedroom and share the bathroom and kitchen with 3 or 4 other residents. There is always a living room too and usually a garden. There is also an office where Porchlight staff can work and a key working room which is a special space for residents to meet weekly with their specific member of staff who is helping them with their problems and their aspirations.

As seen in the previous activities, there are many different reasons why people become homeless and many different problems that arise while people are homeless. Equally, everyone Porchlight helps is an individual with their own hopes and wishes for the future. For that reason the charity has to be flexible and make sure that each person has their own unique plan of action. The end point of that plan of action is always independence. To reach that many areas of someone’s life may need to be supported for example; how they manage their health (physical and mental health), how they manage their relationships, how they look after their money, whether they have the confidence and self-esteem, and skills to work or play an active part in their community in other ways. Whatever someone’s needs are, Porchlight will ensure that they are met. If the charity doesn’t provide a specific service, for example when someone needs help with an addiction then Porchlight will link the individual in with a service that can help.

Watching the James video will illustrate a lot of the themes that were discussed so far in the lesson and consolidate learning.

Some fact and figures

- The biggest cause of homelessness is relationship breakdown – of adult partners or children and their parents
- Usually a number of factors come together to cause someone to become homeless, including: mental ill health, lack of qualifications, lack of social support, addictions, having been in care, the services or prison
- For more information visit www.shelter.org.uk
- The average life expectancy of a male rough sleeper is 47 and a female is 43
- Hundreds of people sleep rough in Kent every night
- There are rough sleepers in every single district in Kent, including Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells