The Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities

Violence & Bullying Prevention through Human Rights Education—The Next Steps

Teacher Guide

Human Rights
Education and
Multiculturalism
Fund

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Introduction

Safe and Caring Youth Action

The Youth Action project provides an opportunity within the school for youth to identify and address specific issues or interests. Students conduct research among their peers and then develop, undertake and evaluate projects that will address the issues/interests they uncover. The steps involved in the Next Steps student-led action are:

1. **Planning the Action**

   - This involves creating priorities from the themes identified in the action research component. Goals and objectives are established to help guide the action plan.

2. **Implementing the Action**

   - Once the plan is completed, the project is put into action.

3. **Evaluating the Action**

   - Once the project is completed, it is evaluated by measuring whether or not the benefits were achieved.

4. **Reporting Your Results**

   - The action plan will be summarized in a report.

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities' has prepared this guide and other youth action and youth engagement resources to provide support for students and their adult supervisors to carry out each step in the youth action process.

Involvement in this project encourages students to improve their research skills, problem-solving skills and knowledge in the area of their action plan. It provides a valuable opportunity for students to adopt leadership roles within their schools and to develop teamwork, communication and presentation skills.

A sample *Next Steps Parent Notification* letter is provided to update and include parents in the progress of the project.

How to Use This Guide

The guide is organized according to the following headings:

- **Topic**

- **Background Information**
  These sections will include background information regarding the topic that may be helpful in preparing for work with the students. This information is also included in a student guide that could be provided to students if it was deemed to be an appropriate reading level for the students involved with the youth action project.

- **Suggested Presentation Strategies**
  The corresponding pages of the Student Guide will be shown in parentheses.

A sample *Next Steps Parent Notification* letter is provided to update and include parents in the progress of the project.

Next Steps Parent Notification – Sample Letter

Dear Parents

We have completed the first stage of our Youth Action project! The students have explored websites and read articles and books about violence and bullying prevention through human rights education to get an understanding of what this is and how it affects people. They have also conducted focus group interviews with students throughout the school to learn more about the topic. Some of the themes we discovered in the focus groups were:

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After hearing students' experiences in the focus groups, our group is motivated to be a part of a solution! During the next few weeks we will be considering what the priorities should be for our action plan and how we can address violence and bullying prevention through human rights education in our school.

Please take some time to discuss with your child what they have learned, listen to their ideas and share your own ideas. Once we have decided on our action plan goals, we will share them with you!
Sincerely

Mr/Ms _____
Teacher/Counsellor

Topic 1: Choosing a Project—Determining Themes

Background Information

When students completed the focus group component of your youth action project, they wrote a report. Now is the time to review the conclusions from the report.

- What did you learn?

- What themes emerged?

These themes will help guide the next steps.

It is sometimes best to think about the themes on your own before you brainstorm with your group as you may come up with ideas that the group would not have come up with together.

However, it is important to share all your ideas with the group and then to create a group list of the themes that emerged from the focus groups.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 2 in the Student Guide)*

It is important to use the results of your focus group to brainstorm all the possible themes. Remember, you most likely will not be able to take action on all of the themes that emerged from your focus group.

It is sometimes best to think about the themes on your own before you brainstorm with your group as you may come up with ideas that the group would not have come up with together.

As the students do the activity, be sure one student is acting as a recorder.

Activity: Reviewing Your Themes and Identifying Priorities

Time: 20 minutes

Materials and Resources:

- Copy of group report from focus groups for each student
- Chart paper
- Marker

Objective:

This activity helps students review the list of themes that emerged from the focus groups.

Activity:

Provide each student with a copy of the report to review. Allow each student time to consider what they learned and what themes emerged.

Ask the group to:

- Share their thoughts on what they learned from the focus group.
- List the major themes that evolved from the focus group. Record this information.

(You may have discussed this list when you analyzed your data.)

It is important to share all your ideas with the group and then to create a group list of the themes that emerged from the focus groups.

Topic 2:   Creating the Priorities

Background Information

The themes that your students have identified from the focus groups will help determine their priorities. It is sometimes easy to get carried away and create too many priorities. Students must recognize that they do not have limitless time and even though they may have many themes and many priorities, they may not be able to cover them all. They need to determine priorities by looking at their list through these two different lenses:

- What is important to us?

- What do we feel passionate about?

When they look through these lenses, they are most likely to find a project that they can easily sustain.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 3 in the Student Guide)*

It is much easier to sustain a project if your team is passionate about it and if your team is capable in that area. For instance, if a theme emerged that bullying often occurs in the foyer and main entry to the school, you may decide that a priority is to address this.

Activity: Think-Pair-Share

Time: 15 minutes

Materials and Resources: None

Objective:

This activity will allow students to understand the importance of choosing a project that matches their interests and skills.

Activity:

1. Ask each student to individually think about

   - An activity/action that they completed and one that they may have started but did not finish.

   - The reasons why they completed or did not complete the activity.

2. Ask each student to turn to the person beside them and share their thoughts.

3. End with a brief group discussion on why it is important to choose a project they are passionate about and they believe they have the skills and talents that will support them in completing the project.

4. Discuss how to ensure sustainability of a project.

5. Using the list of the main themes identified previously, record those that meet the criteria of sustainability.

6. Identify no more than 3 main priorities for your student-led action.

Topic 3: Understanding Goals and Objectives

Background Information

When Alice meets the Cheshire Cat at the crossroads in the storybook, *Alice in Wonderland*, she asks him which road to take. He responds by asking her where she wants to go. When she tells him that she "doesn't much care where", he replies, "then it doesn't matter which way you go."

Goals and objectives are very similar. Goals are the "big picture" ideas and objectives are the incremental steps that are used to help you achieve the goal. Goal setting will help determine where your students want to go and how you can best get there. As illustrated in *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice needed to set a goal to determine where she wanted to go before anyone could help.

Creating awareness of the student's chosen topic will be a major component of at least one of their goals because they will want the students in their school to become more aware of violence and bullying prevention through human rights education.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 4 in the Student Guide)*

Every action that we take is generally based on a goal that we want to achieve. We may not think in terms of goals and objectives every time we take action, but for this project you will be asked to think in those terms.

Example: If you have the goal of making people aware of bullying and violence prevention through human rights education, then you would have to assess that goal in relation to the team's talents, skills and abilities. You may have an objective that states, "All classes will make posters making students aware of violence and bullying through human rights education". However some of the classes may not be able to participate. Perhaps, more realistically, you can have an objective that states 90% of the classes will be involved in a poster campaign.

You must be careful how broad you leave the goal of awareness.

Topic 4:   Setting Goals and Objectives

Background Information

There are important guidelines to follow in order to ensure the effectiveness of your students' goals and objectives:

- **Make the goal valuable.** A goal that has little value is very difficult to achieve. If you cannot see the benefits of achieving the goal, it is likely not a good goal. If you are spending time and effort to achieve a goal, you will want to know that it has value and will be beneficial.

- **Write it down in measurable language.** Writing down a goal makes it real. Writing it in a way that is measurable enables you to easily determine if you have reached your goal. Posting your goal where it is visible for the entire group may be helpful.

- **Visualize your goal.** There is much to be said about the saying, "If you can dream it, you can achieve it!" Picturing yourself achieving the goal helps you to attain the goal.

- **Set realistic deadlines.** If your goals or objectives are not scheduled, you may fall behind or get off task. You need to set enough time to achieve the goal or objective but not too much time so as to get distracted.

- **Identify potential roadblocks.** There will always be roadblocks to achieving your goals and objectives. Roadblocks are things that get in the way of your success. People who are able to achieve their goals and objectives have purposefully and thoroughly analyzed their goals and objectives to determine potential roadblocks. If you think about all the potential problems before they occur, you can either stop them from occurring or you will be ready for them when they do happen. This is called being proactive.

- **Review your progress.** As you are working toward your goals or objectives make sure you set up review periods so that you can check to see if you are where you need to be. Sometimes you may need to change gears part way down the road toward a goal in order to maintain your work toward the desired outcome. It is easier to do this if you are reviewing the goals regularly.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 5 in the Student Guide)*

Topic 5:   Goals and Objectives—Making it Happen

Background Information

As students complete each objective, they are one step closer to achieving their goal. Make sure their objectives are relatively easy to achieve because if an objective is too difficult it will impede progress.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to pages 6 and 7 in the Student Guide)*

Guide students through the process of completing the included handouts to identify their goals and objectives, potential roadblocks and required tasks.

Activity: Writing Goals and Objectives

Time: 25 minutes

Materials and Resources:

- *Handout 1: Identifying Your Goals and Objectives*

Objective:

This activity will allow students to practise writing goals and objectives.

Activity:

As a team, write a goal and three objectives to reach that goal.

Complete this information on *Handout 1: Identifying your Goals and Objectives*. Write the goal and objectives according to the themes that were previously identified according to the focus groups.

Be sure to follow the six guidelines to ensure the effectiveness of your goals and objectives.

Page 13 is a completed example for the teacher to use to help guide this activity and the following *page 14* is a handout for students to use. A copy of this handout has also been included in the Student Guide on page 6.

Handout 1: Identifying your Goals and Objectives (completed example)

Goal:			
Objective: *What needs to be done and how will you know it is done?*	**Person(s) Responsible:** *Who will make sure this objective is being taken care of?*	**Progress Review Dates**: *What dates do we want to review our progress?*	**Anticipated Completion Date:** *When do you anticipate this objective being met?*
Create posters that describe what violence and bullying is and what it looks like.	John	Feb 1, 2014	March 15, 2014
Host a violence and bullying prevention through human rights education awareness day at the school.	Sam	Feb 28, 2014	March 15, 2014
Create a video that shows what violence and bullying looks like and how human rights education can help to address it	Yasmeen	March 15, 2014 April 30, 2014	May 31, 2014

Possible Roadblocks:	**Ways to Overcome These:**
Lack of money to pay for materials for posters etc.	Fundraising In-kind donations
Staff not in favour of using class time for awareness day.	Plan well ahead and present briefly at staff meeting on benefits of day.

Handout 1: Identifying your Goals and Objectives (student version)

Goal:			
Objective: *What needs to be done and how will you know it is done?*	**Person(s) Responsible:** *Who will make sure this objective is being taken care of?*	**Progress Review Dates**: *What dates do we want to review our progress?*	**Anticipated Completion Date:** *When do you anticipate this objective being met?*

Possible Roadblocks:	**Ways to Overcome These:**

Activity: Identifying Tasks

Time: 25 minutes

Materials and Resources:

- *Handout 2: Objective Task List*

Objective:

This activity will allow students to identify tasks.

Activity:

Using the goals and objectives that have been previously identified, choose one objective and break it down into the tasks required to complete the objective.

As a team, identify tasks, resources and deadlines in order to complete the Objective Task List.

Complete the information on *Handout 2: Objective Task List.*

Page 16 is a completed example for the teacher to use to help guide this activity and the following *page 17* is a handout for students to use. A copy of this handout has also been included in the Student Guide on page 7.

Handout 2: Objective Task List (completed example)

Using the goals and objectives that have been previously identified, choose one objective and break it down into the tasks required to complete the objective.

Objective:
Create posters that describe violence and bullying and what it looks like.
Person(s) responsible for this objective: John

Task *What needs to be done in order to achieve the objective?*	Resources *Are there necessary resources? Financial resources? Product resources? etc.*	Person Responsible *Who will make sure this task is taken care of?*	Deadline *When must this task be completed?*
Determine cost of poster supplies-paper, markers, etc. Possibly ask for donation of supplies from the art department.	Art teacher	Jacqui	Feb 1, 2014
Collect information that will be included on posters.	Entire team	Trace	Feb 15, 2014

As a team, identify goals, objectives, tasks, resources and deadlines in order to complete the Objective Task List.

Handout 2: Objective Task List (student version)

Using the goals and objectives that have been previously identified, choose one objective and break it down into the tasks required to complete the objective.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Objective:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Person(s) responsible for this objective:</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Task
What needs to be done in order to achieve the objective?</td>
<td>Resources
Are there necessary resources? Financial resources? Product resources? etc.</td>
<td>Person Responsible
Who will make sure this task is taken care of?</td>
<td>Deadline
When must this task be completed?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As a team, identify goals, objectives, tasks, resources and deadlines in order to complete the Objective Task List.

Topic 6:   Understanding the Perceived Benefits

Background Information

It is important for students to have an idea of the benefits that may be acquired if the project is successful. In order to do this, students imagine being successful with each of their goals and think about the changes and benefits that success would bring to their school or community.

As students brainstorm the changes and the benefits, they will keep track of the groups' thoughts. These perceived benefits will help to determine the success of their youth action project.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 8 in the Student Guide)*

Activity: Writing Perceived Benefits

Time: 10 minutes

Materials and Resources:

- Chart paper
- Marker

Objective:

This activity will allow students to consider the benefits that their project will have for their school and community.

Activity:

As a team, brainstorm the perceived benefits that your project may have for your school and community and record this information on the chart paper.

Topic 7:   Obtaining Permission

Background Information

Your students now have a good idea of what they would like to achieve through their youth action project. It is necessary to ensure that they have obtained permission prior to embarking on this venture. You must work with your students to help them determine from whom they need to seek permission to continue with the project.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 9 in the Student Guide)*

When you propose the project to others, be sure to provide them with written copies of your goals and objectives as well as a written copy of the perceived benefits. This will help people understand not only the project's importance but also that you have thoroughly thought the project through.

Topic 8:   Writing a Budget

Background Information

Now that your students have identified their goals and objectives, they should be able to determine where they may need funding to support them. Although determining where funding is necessary may be easy, determining how much funding is necessary may require some research.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 10 in the Student Guide)*

To determine how much funding is necessary, you will need to contact service providers to ask for quotes. When you contact the service providers, you will need to tell them exactly what it is that you want and when you need it completed so they can give you an accurate quote. Always remember to shop around. You will want to get quotes from a couple of service providers so you are able to choose the one that best meets your needs.

Remember when you request funding, you are a representative of the school and therefore the school must be aware and have already given permission for you to seek funding from outside sources.

Topic 9:   Seeking Support

Background Information

Remember—you are not alone.

There are most likely many other people who are working on taking action in the same area as your students. Encourage your students to connect with people at your school and in the community to find out where and with whom you might be able to create systems of support. Support may come in the form of helping your students with information and it also may come in the form of funding.

Information Support

If your students need help in finding information, they will need to be clear on what information they are seeking. Make sure they have clear questions that get at the root of the information you need. They will want to know what has been done previously in this area of research so that this information can inform your work.

Funding Support

There are two different ways to make requests for funding. Your students may be asking for direct funding to support their project or they may be asking for in-kind funding which means that the supporter will provide services for them without charging a fee. Whether they are requesting in-kind or direct funding support, it is a good idea to let service providers know that your students are part of a youth action team trying to create positive change.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to pages 11 and 12 in the Student Guide)*

Potential supporters may be able to make a funding decision over the phone or they may request a letter about your project to help them make this decision. If you are writing a letter, you should include:

- The project title.

- The goals of your project.

- Who is involved in the project.

- The perceived benefits of the project to the school and the community.

- A very clear explanation of the kind of support you are requesting.

- Timelines for when you expect the project to be completed.

- A "thank you" for their consideration.

You might also decide to attach a copy of your goals and objectives. Potential supporters will want to know that you have thought through the project and have a plan to reach your goals.

Be sure to write the letter in business style. It may be helpful to add a last sentence indicating that you can be contacted if more information is needed and that you look forward to hearing back from them by a certain date.

Topic 10: Monitoring Your Progress

Background Information

It is important to continually monitor progress as your students work toward achieving the goals of their project. Without monitoring, it is easy to become distracted and not meet the deadlines required to complete the project.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 13 in the Student Guide)*

Meet regularly to discuss the progress of the project. Be sure that each person at the meeting knows, when they leave, what they need to accomplish before the next meeting. Keep a record of these meetings.

Topic 11: Evaluating Your Success

Background Information

You and your students will want to determine if their project has met its goals. Achieving objectives does not necessarily mean that goals have been met. It is important to know whether or not the completion of the project has achieved the perceived benefits.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 14 in the Student Guide)*

In order to determine project success you will want to have a method of measuring the actual, as opposed to perceived, benefits of your project. This does not have to be difficult or long. It may simply take the form of asking students in your school to answer a few questions on a survey.

Activity: Writing Perceived Benefits

Time: 15 minutes

Materials and Resources:

- Completed chart of perceived benefits (see *Topic 6 Activity: Writing Perceived Benefits* on page 19)

Objective:

This activity will allow students to determine ways to evaluate the success of their project.

Activity:

Using the list of perceived benefits, ask the students to determine ways to measure whether or not each benefit has been achieved.

Topic 12: Showing Appreciation

Background Information

There are many people who will likely be involved in the success of your students' project. People from the community might provide support either by helping with information or providing direct or in-kind financial support. Be sure to show appreciation to those who have helped. This not only demonstrates awareness of their contributions, but it also helps to build community relations with your school.

The easiest way to thank people is in the form of a card, letter, email or posting on the school website or in school announcements.

You and your students may also wish to include sponsors' names on products produced or on information bulletins about your project.

Writing a public thank you to the local newspaper and/or your school newsletter is also an effective way to show your appreciation. Sometimes people choose to have a social gathering to thank the supporters.

Finally, don't forget to thank your fellow teachers and the students directly involved in the project. You and your students have no doubt accomplished something good and meaningful for your school and community. This is important to remember.

Suggested Presentation Strategies

Script suggestions: *(Refer to page 15 in the Student Guide)*

A word of caution about social gatherings as a form of thanks: Social gatherings cost money and people providing financial support may wonder how wise it is to spend money in this fashion.

Topic 13: Reporting Your Results

Background Information

Once your youth action project is completed, the team should prepare a final report.

The following is a template for a report that your students can use.

Youth Action Project Title: _____

Youth Action Team Members: _____

School: _____

School District: _____

Number of Students Involved: _____

Teacher Supervisor(s): _____

Describe each goal and comment on whether the goal was achieved. If the goal was not achieved, try to determine what prevented the achievement.

What were the most effective components of your project?

What might you change to increase the success of your project if you were to repeat it?

Comment on your preparedness for completing the youth action project. Discuss what helped you be prepared and what else could have been done to prepare you better.

Bibliography

Cook, M., ed. 2005. *Creative Tools: Civic Engagement of Young People*. International Institute for Childs Rights and Development. Victoria: Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria.

Fire It Up! A Youth Action Manual. Youth Action Network website. www.youthactionnetwork. org/rac/fireitup/index.html (accessed November 22, 2006).

Johnston, S., G. Hughes, A. Bopp, A. Paul, C. Rowlandso, L. Bowers, G. Schumm, L. Manko, and N. Tanner. (ed.) *Students for Change Action Manual*. Edmonton: Learning Network, University of Alberta.

Youth Works! Creating and Developing Youth-led Volunteer Projects. Knowledge network website. www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/pdf/youthworks.pdf (accessed November 20, 2006)

Resources

Websites on Youth Action:

- www.peelschools.org/slgd/index.html

- www.mcs.bc.ca/yaction.htm

- www.youthactionnetwork.org/

- www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/Fireitup/index.html

NOTE: All resources listed need to be reviewed before use by teacher leaders to ensure they comply with grade level and school expectations.
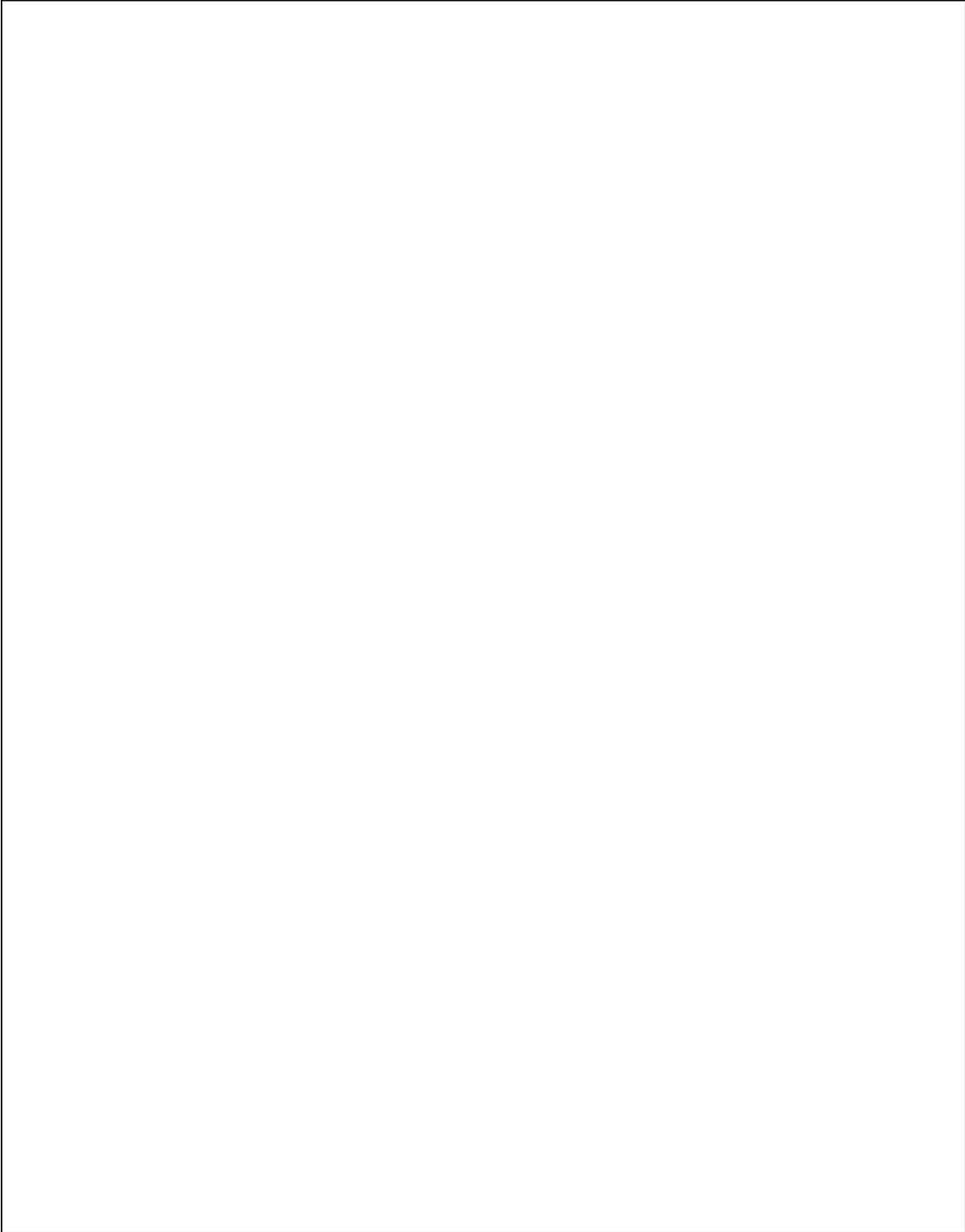
Start a Human Rights Club

Starting a Human Rights Club is a great way for students and teachers to develop numerous action plans, and have on-going projects throughout the school year. Furthermore, with a club structure students can focus on specific issues that affect their school and continue to foster a human rights-friendly community that transcends grades and years. Here are some important steps to forming a Human Rights Club:

1. **Find a club advisor**: Find a teacher or administrator who is willing to act as a club advisor. This advisor will sit in on meetings, facilitate activities and assist in acquiring resources for the club.

2. **Get approval from administration**: Make sure that your club follows all of the rules in place for school clubs. Your advisor would be a good resource in assisting with this process!

3. **Recruit responsible members**: Recruit all students who may be interested in participating in the club. Be sure to seek members from all grades! It is important to ensure that expectations of members are clear from the beginning – you want everyone involved to be dedicated and responsible!

4. **Make a plan for running your club:** Choose a consistent meeting time for your club so that most members may attend regularly. Survey the group to figure out what kind of projects people have in mind for the club. Make sure to be open to suggestions from all members!

5. **Delegate tasks:** Make sure that all members have specific tasks that they are responsible for. This will help your club run efficiently. Some groups may even wish to develop a formal structure for their club. This involves electing specific positions or officers for the year. When adopting this structure for your club, it is best to begin a process of electing positions near the end of the school year for the upcoming September. These positions may include:

   - **President:** Manages the general operations of the club and runs meetings. Supervises the other club officers. Communicates directly with club advisor and school administration.

- **Vice-President:** Assists the President with their duties and acts in their place when the President is absent.

- **Treasurer:** Keeps accurate record of club finances, including fundraising activities (with assistance from the club advisor.)

- **Secretary:** Records minutes from each meeting and distributes minutes to all members following meetings. Coordinates agenda and meetings.

- **Fundraising:** Coordinates fundraising efforts.

- **Marketing:** Coordinates any advertising, recruiting and awareness initiatives for the club.

6. **Stay organized:** Use information gathered from your action research project to determine what types of initiatives would be most appropriate for your school. Be focused and selective with your project – it is better to focus efforts and execute well than to spread yourselves too thin!

7. **Have fun!**

Notes: