

Adolescents form statements to describe problems or opportunities they would like to address.



Activity Overview

Purpose

Discuss problems or opportunities with others.

Objectives

Adolescents will be able to:

- ▶ Discuss problem/opportunity statements.
- ▶ Practice listening to others in small groups.

Competency domains

Critical thinking and decision making; Creativity and innovation.

Works well for

Circles where adolescents can sit together, reach decisions collectively, and work on activities in small groups.

Phase

Taking Action.

Before

Adolescents should have already chosen a challenge topic to work on together as a circle. The **Our challenges, our solutions**, and **Our environment** activities provides them with ways to explore different challenges, problems and opportunities. The **Choosing a challenge topic** activity (with the marketplace of ideas) helps adolescents to select one challenge topic from among many that might interest them.

After

Adolescents should develop and carry out plans to address the problem or opportunity they identified in their statement. The **Using interview skills** and **Brainstorming solutions, possibilities and project ideas** are good next steps to do this.

Preparation

None needed.



Forming problem and opportunity statements

1

Explain:

Participants will talk about problem/opportunity statements:

2

||| Facilitator says:

"We have been talking about (insert the name of the challenge topic in our recent sessions). This is a challenging problem/opportunity, but it is something we can work on together. Today our goal is to develop a problem/opportunity statement, which we can then use to form a plan to address this issue."

3

Write down the following key characteristics of a problem/opportunity statement on the marker board:

- ▶ It shouldn't be too focused, or too general.
- ▶ It should highlight an issue and suggest an approach to solving it.
- ▶ It should be one sentence long.

4

Split the circle into groups of three or four adolescents each.

5

Explain:

Each group will come up with several different problem/opportunity statements for one issue and then select their favourite one.

Share and Take Away

6

Explain:

Each team will share their statement with the circle. The adolescents can then provide constructive feedback to help each other revise their statements.

7

Keep the statements for developing project plans in future sessions.

Forming problem and opportunity statements

Do & Don't

- ✓ Use a problem or opportunity that the adolescents themselves chose.
- ✓ Allow adolescents to consider challenges that may be difficult for them to address.
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to consider opportunities as well as problems.
- ✗ Force adolescents to focus on a specific topic that you chose for them.

Adaptation

Low literacy: Instead of writing, adolescents can use drawings to illustrate the problem or opportunities they want to address.

Environment

Indoor or outdoor space. Quiet.

Supplies

- ▶ At least one large piece of chart paper for each group (or something else for them to write or draw on).
- ▶ At least one pen, pencil or marker for each adolescent.

Improvise

Adolescents can use other forms of expression to describe their problem or opportunity topic -- For example, they can create drawings, photo essays, dramas or stories.

Adolescents can explore their problem or opportunity topic in more depth by interviewing each other or others in their community.

Continue

Adolescents should have the opportunity to explore their own solutions to their problem or opportunity in future sessions. This could include carrying out plans to address the challenge, or using the problem or opportunity as inspiration for creative storytelling.