



## Activity 18

**Age:** 12 yrs +

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials:** Copies of role-cards,  
paper, markers, magazines

# You've got to Fight for your Right

**AIM:** To explore the lives of people who are taking action for rights and how young people might take action in their own world/community

## What to do:

Form groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a role-card. Explain that they have to come up with a way to communicate to the rest of the group -

- what they are taking action on
- who was doing the action
- what they did
- what the outcome was

They can present this to the group in a picture, poster, a collage or a drama/mime. Give them 20 -25 minutes to prepare and then have each group present back and get the rest of the group to describe what they think is happening. If after a couple of minutes they haven't guessed correctly get the group presenting to explain their scenario.

## Debrief Questions:

- \* What did you think about the different stories?
- \* Do you know of any examples of young people taking action for their rights? (or ask if they have any of their own experience)
- \* What opportunities can you think of that there are for young people in Ireland?
- \* If there isn't any that you know of can you come up with ideas/actions you could try and take?

# Role-Cards

## **Ireland**

A group of young people in Ireland recently heard about the conditions that young people, making a well-known brand of trainers, were working under and wanted to respond. They decided to develop a campaign to improve the working conditions of the workers in El Salvador. They produced postcards printed with a message calling for the company to adopt an ethical code of conduct for its employees. To draw attention to the campaign and encourage people in their community to sign the cards, they made a huge model trainer out of papier-mâché, and set it up at local events. The cards were signed and sent off to the company. After some time the group received a letter from company headquarters admitting the problem and explaining that the company now had an ethical code of conduct in place and that it was being monitored independently.

## **Ghana**

A group of young people in Ghana recently took the opportunity to use their voice to campaign for the right to education. The group of young people became reporters on a youth radio programme which was aired on Ghana's national radio network. They urged children to go to school and appealed to adults to take responsibility and ensure that all children have access to quality education. They interviewed other young people and found out that some drop out of school because conditions in schools are not good, there were no chairs or desks, and others don't have books, or pencils to write with. This project has allowed young people to make their views known on important issues such as education. By using their freedom of expression adult policy-makers in Ghana are now considering young people's views when making decisions that affect them.

## **Sierra Leone**

Concerned with the increasing number of children and young people living on the Streets in their town, ten different youth organisations in Sierra Leone decided to come together to respond to the issue. They organised a one day forum where they invited youth living on the streets, to come and share their experiences of living on the street and how they came to be there. Here they learnt that very little has been done to address child rights violation in the country. They then organised a 'Youth on the Streets Rally'. On the day hundreds of young people came together to take to the streets to insist that the young people of Sierra Leone had the right to shelter. They signed a petition, which they presented to the local government on the day. As a result the local government have agreed to begin to look at different ways to get children and young people off the streets.

## **USA**

A group of young people who live in the inner city in the USA were frustrated at the lack of space in their community for them to play sports or hang out. The only park in their area was overgrown and often used for dumping rubbish. They decided to do something themselves to see their right to play fulfilled. They started a campaign to gather as many youth volunteers as they could to give up one Saturday to clean up the park. When the day came there were 150 volunteers and they spent the day cleaning up the rubbish in the park and tidying up the garden. They took photos of their work and sent them to the local council asking that they now act to develop this space so that children and young people in their area can enjoy the right to play. The local council were so impressed by the young people's action that they agreed to invest money into developing a clean, safe space for the young people of that community.