

Peace Light



The Activity:

Help spread the Peace Light and its message in your community

Fiontar:

Suas:

- Find out about the Peace Light
- Help organise spreading the Peace Light

Trasna:

- Organise spreading the Peace Light
- Coordinate with other Venture Units

SPICES:

- Social: Get involved in your community
- Character: Promise and Law in to practice
- Spiritual: See spirituality as a part of your life



Plan

In December each year a candle will be lit in the Grotto of Christ's Birth in the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem. This flame will be taken by young Israeli and Palestinian Scouts to Tel Aviv Airport where with the support of Austrian Airlines a Scout will carry it to Austria.

In the week before Christmas, there will be Light distribution services across Ireland. From these Scouts will take the Light to their communities: to places of worship, community centres, hospitals and homes.

For information on the Light Sharing events:

facebook.com/IrishPeaceLight

Also check out:

scout.org/peacelight



Do

Step 1: Explore understandings of peace in one of your meetings.

Step 2: Take part in your nearest Share the Peace Light Ceremony or arrange to get the Peace Light to your Group. Plan a secure and safe way to transport the flame.

Step 3: Distribute the Light in your community. Think about places of worship, hospitals, and community centres.

Step 4: Plan a simple ceremony for when you pass the Light on. Also, maybe give them a small information note on the Light.

Step 5: Make out a plan for who is going to go where to spread the Light. Also, remember that the days coming up to Christmas can be very busy for people, especially parents, so plan in advance!



Peace Light: Activities

“Imagine yourself from the outside”

As an American-Indian proverb says: “You cannot judge a person until you have walked five miles in his moccasins”. Use this idea to discuss intercultural understanding and living in peace. Each Crew should have a discussion using on the following questions:

What is the message of the proverb? What does it tell you personally?

- Have you ever tried to look at yourself from the outside?
- Have you ever tried to put yourself in “someone else’s shoes”?
- What have you learned from that situation? Has it helped you understand yourself better? Has it helped you understand others better? In what way?

“Is it really fair?”

Members of the crew are asked to tell a light-hearted joke, caricature or saying about a foreigner, somebody from a different race/ethnic group, from a different culture or country, etc. Then, together, the group evaluates/assesses:

- Is the joke, story, etc. really negative, derogatory, pejorative? If YES, why is that so?
- Is it likely to offend someone who feels affected by it? Is it likely to create ill feelings? ...to diminish their self-esteem?
- Is there a generalisation which affects a category of people (e.g. Jews, Arabs, punks, etc.)?
- How would you feel if you were targeted by such a joke, cartoon, etc? How would you react if treated with contempt?
- General question as a conclusion: How would you like society to look at you? Is it not fair to say that you should look at others in the same way as you want them to look at you?

This is intended to be a reflective exercise, not a license to tell offence or hurtful jokes.



Peace Light: Activities

Addressing Discrimination

1. Remind everyone that discrimination takes many forms. Ask each Crew to brainstorm examples of discrimination. List their answers on newsprint or a chalkboard. Include any of the following that participants neglect to mention:

- Teasing, name calling, or using derogatory terms for race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender
 - Excluding someone from activities, or ignoring or denying requests based on the requester's race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity
 - Physically or verbally attacking someone (especially with the 'authorities' ignoring, condoning, or even encouraging this behaviour)
 - Treating someone unfairly in the workplace, public spaces, or educational institutions (for example, denying someone a job or a raise on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity)
2. In Crews, venture scouts should think of a time when they or someone they care about was treated unfairly or unequally because they were members of some specific group. Ask for volunteers to share these experiences.
3. Ask the venture scouts to identify what would have helped in the situation. Then encourage others to share their stories.
4. Ask what strategies and techniques the venture scouts might use to help end discrimination in different settings, like school, clubs, and in public spaces.



Peace Light: Activities

Make our Unit a safe space for LGBTI+ Venture Scouts

By making simple changes you can create an inclusive environment for everyone.

1. Showing respect is the first step to creating a safe environment for all people. Respecting one another means listening to one another, being considerate of privacy and treating everyone with dignity.
2. Call out homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, interphobic, queerphobic and acephobic language: The language we use can have an immense effect on those around us. Although it may not always be intentional our language can have a negative impact on others if we are not careful in what we say. If we hear others in our schools using language which is homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, and queerphobic it is important to address it in a constructive way.
3. Avoid using binary language whenever possible: This means that we avoid addressing people as male or female where possible. This may seem like a challenge to begin with, but small changes to the words we use can make a big difference for transgender and non-binary people by helping them feel more included in schools. For example when giving a presentation and addressing a group instead of saying “ladies and gentlemen” you could say “scouts” or “friends”
4. Be inclusive in activities: Sometimes troops can be divided by gender for different activities. Advocate on the behalf of non-binary and transgender classmates to play with mixed teams.
5. Advocate for gender neutral bathrooms and changing areas: these allow those who do not want to define their gender or do not feel comfortable using gender specific bathrooms to still participate fully. Advocating for gender neutral areas shows LGBTI+ students the support and acceptance there is for them.
6. Put up posters for LGBTI+ support groups and hotlines from groups such as BeLonG To, Teni, LBGT Ireland and ShoutOut.

Tips modified from <https://spunout.ie/life/article/school-safe-space-lgbti-students>



Peace Light: Activities

How to Be a Super Activist and/or Ally (1)

1. Ask the UN how they think homophobia and transphobia affect LGBTQ+ youth—write the Venture Scouts' on a board. (Help them to think of answers such as: they can cause depression; they make LGBTQ+ youth think that they aren't as good as other people; they can lead to drug and alcohol use, etc.)
2. In Crews, discuss whether or not homophobia/transphobia affect straight youth. If they think that the answer is yes, ask them to come up with five or six examples. Bring the groups back together and ask them to share some of the things they came up with.
3. Distribute and discuss the handout 14 Ways Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Everyone (next pages)
4. In Crews, now discuss ways that LGBTQ+ youth and their straight allies can fight homophobia and transphobia. Distribute the handout Ways to Be a GLBTQ Ally or Activist. Then, have a general discussion and write down your ideas.
5. Finish up with the some of these questions:
 - Did you learn anything today that surprised you?
 - Were you surprised about ways in which homophobia affects your life? The lives of your friends and family?
 - In view of what you know now, will you take action to oppose homophobia and transphobia when you witness them?

Modified from Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit

www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/safespace/



Peace Light: Activities

How to Be a Super Activist and/or Ally (2)

Ways to Fight Homophobia and Transphobia

Here are just a few of the many ways that young people can fight homophobia and transphobia. If participants have a hard time coming up with actions they can take, suggest some of these.

1. Be a friend to LGBTQ+ youth.
2. When you hear homophobic or transphobic comments, calmly assert your belief in everyone's right to be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Ask to speak with adults in charge (of the school, agency, community of faith, etc.) about the importance of a 'zero tolerance' policy for homophobic and transphobic comments and actions.
4. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper highlighting the topic
5. Have for a relaxed dress code that honors each person's individuality and unique gender expression.
6. Help create a safe space for all in your Unit
8. Create and distribute a list of community resources for LGBTQ youth.

Modified from Creating Safe Space for GLBTQ Youth: A Toolkit

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How to Be a Super Activist and/or Ally (3)

Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Everyone

Ways that Homophobia and Transphobia Affect LGBTQ Youth

1. Homophobia and transphobia make many LGBTQ youth feel isolated, lonely, and ashamed.
2. Homophobia/transphobia create an environment in which LGBTQ youth may have to face harassment and even violence in their schools, communities and/or homes.
3. They force many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning youth to become sexually active before they really want to, choosing partners of the opposite sex just to hide their sexual orientation or their questions. Transphobia forces many transgender youth to become sexually active before they really want to just so they can hide their gender identity.
5. Homophobia and transphobia contribute to the self-doubt that makes many GLBTQ youth turn to drugs and/or alcohol to numb their feelings.

How Homophobia and Transphobia Affect Straight Youth

6. Homophobia and transphobia pressure straight people to act unkindly or even cruelly towards LGBTQ people and encourage bullying and cruelty toward anyone whose appearance or behaviour isn't sufficiently 'macho' or 'feminine'.
7. Homophobia and transphobia force straight people to act 'straight,' limiting their individuality and self-expression.
8. Homophobia/transphobia can destroy family relationships
9. Homophobia and transphobia lead many straight youth to become sexually active before they really want to just to 'prove' they are straight.
10. Homophobia, along with racism, sexism, and poverty, makes it hard to end the HIV epidemic.
11. Homophobia/transphobia make it impossible for people to value diversity and the wonderful variety that exists among all people.

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Messengers of Peace

The Messengers of Peace Award aims to promote world peace through the positive activities of young people. Any Venture Scout who has voluntarily invested more than 10 hours in a community service project is eligible for the award. This can be anything from running a fun day for the disadvantaged in your local community, to coordinating a book donation for a school in need. Any community project that brings a positive change to an area - its health, environment, social circumstances, safety or addresses conflict – is a Messengers of Peace project.



Requirements

Complete a service project which involves at least 10 hours of effort.

Your project should include the following:

- Service to a community: The project should address a need in the community.
- Sustainable: It should have a lasting impact
- Personal Progression: All of the Venture Scouts should be involved in organising and doing the project.

Steps to getting the Award:

1. The Unit or each Crew firstly registers by emailing betterworld@scouts.ie (include your Group details, numbers of Venture Scouts participating, and your planned project)
2. Plan: Learn about a local social issue (meeting) and decide on ways in which you can help (meeting)
3. Do: Crews organise a community project (weekend or weekly activities)
4. Review: Evaluate your project and its impact, and commit to maintaining if required (meeting, on-going). Submit an application.
5. Celebrate your achievement!



Review

Discuss the relevance of the Peace Light, and the idea of spreading?

How was it received in your community?

What could you have done differently?

