Gender will always be an issue, whether it be through injustice and discrimination, attitude or behaviour. This CPR explores how we can help the young people we work with approach the issue of gender in an informed and sensitive way. As this CPR deals with issues of gender and discrimination ensure that the young people are aware that they can discuss issues in confidentiality with you or your fellow youth workers (subject to child protection). Some ideas are orientated towards single sex groups, but ideas can be used for mixed or single sex groups as you feel appropriate to your group.

Gender

This CPR has been exclusively developed and adapted for The Sophia Network

ACTIONS

REFLECTIONS

INDIVIDUALS

GROUPS

Contact

Progress

Risk

Gender discrimination can happen to anyone whether they are male or female. Challenge the young people to come up with a poster ad campaign to highlight the issues of gender discrimination, specifically that which affects young people. You could use the scenario's as a storyboard.
See resources for weblinks.

A day in the life of…..Split the group into genders. Ask them to take a video camera and document the lives of three members of the opposite gender for a day (ideally with varying backgrounds/jobs/ages/ethnicity). This should include their own thoughts on what they find. How does it shape their understanding of the opposite sex?

Make available an optional same sex mentoring scheme for all the young people in your group. Get older young people to mentor the younger ones and leaders/other trusted adults to mentor the older young people (any mentors should be crb checked). To have a listening ear/advice/support for any issues the young people face, gender related or not.

Some Feminists argue that marriage, when the women stays at home, is just a form of legalised prostitution/slavery. The woman exchanges her services for financial security. Discuss.

Watch the film 'Whale Rider' (cert PG). Discuss what holds the young people back from achieving new things. Is it themselves? Or the adults around them?

Ask the young person when they are watching TV to look at how the genders are portrayed in adverts. What different types of women/men do they notice. Discuss their findings.

Set up some 'gender specific' challenges for the young people to complete e.g. putting on make up, fixing a bike, cooking, the offside rule in football etc. Allow the young people to have a go at all the activities.

Listen to the song 'If I were a boy' by Beyonce Knowles. Print off the lyrics (you can find them easily on the net) Ask the young person to write new lyrics to fit the tune of the song, about what they think it would be like to be a member of the opposite sex and how they would treat people/do things differently.

With the young people create a 'respect charter' which outlines how the young people think both genders should be respected in the group. E.g. we will not make sexist comments etc. set up a reward scheme for upholding the 'rules' (group trip out etc).

What makes me a …… woman/man? Have laid out various male/female objects (e.g. lipstick, ribbon, deoderant, football boots). Ask the young people to choose one object that they think defines their femininity/masculinity (or is closest to it). And in pairs discuss.

In a quite space, have laid out the four scenario character descriptions. Leave out a tape recorder and ask the young people to record on the tape how they think they would react to each character if they met them. Then to play this back to themselves. what do they think about what they have said? Do they think their attitudes are discriminatory or prejudiced? As this activity is for personal reflection Erase the tape between young people.

Put up images of people in gender role reversal (e.g. men doing housework/childcare. Women builders/using power tools) etc. Get images off the net or create your own! Stick these up around your space as an image provocation/reflection.

STORY & SCENARIO

- Everyone thinks Phil is Gay, it's not just how he talks, it's his body language and the way he dresses too.
- Jen's friends are always telling her she'll never get a boyfriend because she scares them off with her strong opinions.
- Ruby never goes out without her make up on, she is 'fashion aware' and knows that it's how you look that gets you places.
- John's mates think he is a right laugh, he is always making jokes about women and his one line put downs are legendary.

RESOURCES AND WEBLINKS

www.scout.org/en/about_scouting/the_youth_programme/peace_education/scoutpax/social_issues/gender_discrimination
www.equalityhumanrights.com
www.youthinformation.com/Templates/Internal.asp?NodeID=90841
Theological Resources: The book of Esther, book of Ruth,
Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus by Dr John Gray
Created or Constructed? The great gender debate by Elaine Storkey