

# Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents

## **PROGRAM GUIDE**

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Resources and tools to support facilitators and program coordinators to plan and carry out arts-based activities to promote the psychosocial wellbeing of migrant adolescents in the United States



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**ADOLESCENT  
CIRCLES  
PROGRAM  
OVERVIEW**



# Psychosocial Support Circles for Adolescents (Adolescent Circles)

Arts-based programming for migrant adolescents in the United States

## Adolescent Circles overview

UNICEF's Adolescent Circles is an arts-based psychosocial support program developed for migrant adolescents in the United States to help them cope with stressful circumstances, build healthy relationships, learn new skills, and engage positively with those around them. It consists of a structured sequence of activities that groups of adolescents (age 10 – 18) can move through together (in circles) in a safe space on a regular basis. The Circles can be carried out as a standalone program or integrated with existing programs and activities.

## Background to Adolescent Circles

The package of guidance materials and activities used in the Adolescent Circles was developed from **UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (the Adolescent Kit)**, available online at [www.adolescentkit.org](http://www.adolescentkit.org). The Adolescent Kit is a package of guidance, tools, and activities for supporting adolescents affected by conflict, poverty, and other humanitarian crises. It is a large package of materials designed to be adapted and applied in a broad range of humanitarian (and non-humanitarian) contexts. It has been used to develop programs for adolescents all over the world.

This particular package has been adapted for the United States context based on a field-based assessment mission and a series of discussions with unaccompanied adolescents and the staff who work with them at an emergency reception site in the U.S. A learning framework and a structured sequence of activities were built and compiled based on identified needs. The result is a package of resources for U.S.-based organizations to offer contextualized and comprehensive arts-based programs to promote the psychosocial wellbeing of migrant adolescents in the United States.

## Resources

Resources developed for Adolescent Circles include the following:

- **Program Guide:** Provides an overview of the program, together with guidance and tools for program coordinators and facilitators to work directly with adolescents through the Adolescent Circles approach.
- **Activity Pack:** A pack of 38 in-depth activities to conduct in Adolescent Circles with 20 energizers. Each activity was selected specifically for this context.
- **COVID-adapted Activity Pack:** Guidance and adapted activities that can be carried out when groups of adolescents are unable to come together (due to COVID or other reasons). Activities are designed to be carried out via an array of adapted methods of delivery for virtual and physical spaces for individual adolescents, in family units, small groups, and an array of other modalities adaptable to restrictions and safety protocol associated with COVID.
- **Inspiration Cards:** Inspiration Cards, with only a sentence or two, have ideas for activities for adolescents to do at any point during the program. The cards are designed to be adolescent-led.
- **Emotion Cubes:** A tool to be printed on hard paper and folded into cubes. It is like a die to roll and see different emotions. Facilitators can use this for activities and discussion about feelings and emotions.

## Learning framework

Activities included in the Activity Pack are focused on the following competency learning domains:

Coping with Stress and Managing Emotions
Communication and Expression
Problem Solving and Conflict Management
Hope for the Future and Goal Setting
Cooperation and Teamwork

## Activity phases

### Brief overview

<b>Phase 1. Starting Our Circle</b>	This phase helps a group of adolescents who are coming together for the first time to get to know each other and to develop their circle. Activities were also selected to help adolescents cope with stress and express themselves.
<b>Phase 2. Knowing Ourselves</b>	This phase help adolescents to explore their identities and to learn more about themselves and each other.
<b>Phase 3. Connecting With Others</b>	Adolescents learn skills for building healthy relationships, working together, and connecting positively with their surroundings.
<b>Phase 4. Reaching Out to Others</b>	Adolescents learn how to look around them to find the support they need and explore their interests.
<b>Phase 5 (optional): Adolescent-led Project Planning</b>	This is an optional one-week sequence for adolescents who want to find ways to help those around them. It may be suitable for adolescents who stay longer onsite or any adolescents interested in helping those around them.

### The five activity phases of the core program

This section of the Program Guide outlines a process for facilitators to carry out sequences of activity sessions with and for adolescents through four (or five) phases. Each phase includes five core activities, at least one circle-building activity, and one or more alternate/additional activities.

**Core activities:** Five activities per phase for a total of 25 sequenced activities throughout 5 phases.

**Circle building activities:** Focused on building strong circles and contributing to positive dynamics amongst circle/group members. It can be integrated into one session as a follow-up to the core activity.

**Alternate/additional activity:** Sometimes, an activity doesn't work well with a particular group. Each week has at least one activity that can be substituted for any core activities that aren't working well for a particular group. Additionally, if the group has completed all five core activities for the week and wants to do more, these activities can be used as additional activities.

### Phase 1. Starting Our Circle

This phase helps a group of adolescents who are coming together for the first time to get to know each other and to develop their circle. Activities were selected to help adolescents cope with stress and express themselves positively, which may be particularly important when transitioning to a new care site or community.

The Starting Our Circle phase provides adolescents with ways to build a strong circle when they gather for the first time. It enables adolescents to establish rules for their sessions, begin working as a team, and establish the foundation for future learning.

In the Starting Our Circle phase, adolescents will:

- Gather for the first time in a safe space
- Get to know one another
- Form ground rules for their sessions
- Learn how to work as a team

## Phase 2. Knowing Ourselves

This phase helps adolescents to explore their identities and to learn more about themselves and each other. The Knowing Ourselves phase gives adolescents a chance to learn more about themselves and what they feel. During this phase, adolescents explore their identities and learn new ways to express themselves through different arts and forms of communication.

The Knowing Ourselves phase offers a chance for adolescents in a circle to get to know each other more deeply and to explore new ideas and skills. The foundations that adolescents build during these sessions will help them communicate with others positively, practice teamwork, and develop problem-solving skills.

In the Knowing Ourselves phase, adolescents will:

- Learn more about who they are and what they feel.
- Explore and recognize aspects of their identities, including their strengths, qualities, and interests.
- Begin to build stronger relationships with others in their circles and practice working together.
- Learn new ways to express themselves through different arts and forms of communication.
- Become more comfortable exploring new ideas and skills with other adolescents in their circle.

## Phase 3. Connecting With Others

In this phase, adolescents learn skills for building healthy relationships, working together, and connecting positively with their surroundings. They will learn more about themselves and each other, interact with their peers, and practice skills for working together. **Adolescents who struggle with past difficult experiences and who are still feeling overwhelmed or upset may choose to stay in phases 1 and 2, to repeat these activities if they do not wish to connect with others.**

The activities in this phase work best with a strong circle where adolescents know each other well, feel comfortable and safe working together, and are starting to recover from the immediate crisis.

In the Connecting With Others phase, adolescents will:

- Learn more about themselves and each other.
- Learn to connect with people and places beyond their circle.
- Practice skills for working together.
- Continue to develop a sense of safety and comfort with others, building more trust with each other.
- Work on activities individually and collaboratively, and become more comfortable expressing themselves.
- Develop stronger social and emotional skills that will help them to relate better with those around them.

## Phase 4. Reaching Out to Others

In this phase, adolescents learn to look around them to find the support they need and explore their interests. Building on previous phases, adolescents in this phase begin to think more concretely about planning for the future and setting goals for their transition outside. They identify their priorities, form ideas, make plans, work together, and learn how to manage interpersonal conflicts they encounter around them. They work as a team, using their communication, exploration, and decision-making skills.

In the Reaching Out to Others phase, adolescents will:

- Identify their priorities, form ideas, and work together.

- Work as a team, using their skills for communication, exploration, and decision making.
- Develop and use social and emotional skills, so they relate better with their peers and those around them.
- Develop mutual trust and further friendships.

#### **Phase 5 (optional): Adolescent-led Project Planning**

For adolescents who are very active and interested in finding ways to help their peers, this optional activity sequence can help them develop projects to give back, such as activities that help new arrivals and support their peers. This sequence is only carried out with selected groups of interested adolescents and may be carried out in place of phase 4, concurrently with phase 4, or after phase 4 is complete.

Using this activity sequence, adolescents connect with people beyond their circle to plan and carry out projects themselves. The curiosity, relationships, and skills that adolescents develop in this phase help prepare them for working on group projects. Circles may complete this sequence and move on to carry out their own projects with ongoing support from staff. This sequence of activities is designed to allow adolescents to continue and sustain their activities together for as long as they wish.

In this sequence of activities, adolescents will:

- Put their creativity and problem-solving skills to work on projects that are important to them.
- Learn how to develop project plans and practice their competencies to set priorities and negotiate solutions to problems.
- Improve and use communication and negotiation skills to help them set priorities, make plans for projects, and explore opportunities for supporting their communities.
- Engage and be active in supporting their peers beyond their activity spaces.

## Supplies list

Supplies below per 100 adolescents. 3 – 5 boxes are also needed to hold supplies.

Item	Quantity	Notes
Flip chart paper	1 roll or one pack	May vary depending on size of roll or size of pack. Should be enough for 100 pieces of flip chart paper. One pack may be preferable if scissors are not available onsite.
White paper	3000 sheets	US letter, A4 or any standard size paper for drawing. Thin paper is ok. 30 sheets per adolescent for duration of program
Pens	100 pens	Any standard pen or comparable writing instrument for writing in educational settings
Crayons	10 packs (large size crayons) 10 packs (small size crayons)	Approximately the size of an 18 pack. Or if bigger packs are available you can buy less packs.
Colored markers	10 packs (large size markers) 10 packs (small size markers)	Approximately the size of an 18 pack. Or if bigger packs are available you can buy less packs.
Glue sticks	10 sticks	Small size is ok. 1 glue stick per ten adolescents
Index cards and/or standard sticky notes	TBD	For games and activities. Quantity of these items vary depending on size of packs and size of cards/sticky notes. This is a supplementary material so use your judgement to purchase the suitable amount.
Scotch tape	5 rolls thick 10 rolls thin	For flip chart paper, artwork and for activities
Paint and/or other art supplies	As per availability, budget and interest of facilitator	Any paints or other art supplies would make activities more engaging for adolescents. May choose economic option of art supplies as per availability.



# **FORMING AND SUPPORTING ADOLESCENT CIRCLES**



### What are Adolescent Circles?

In order to learn and engage actively (inside and beyond their activity spaces), adolescents participating in any programme need to feel safe, included and valued. . The time they spend together should give them a chance to connect with their peers, and practice communication, teamwork and other skills as they work, play and have fun together. To foster these positive relationships, facilitators should support the adolescents who participate in their programmes in coming together and forming 'Adolescent Circles' ('Circles') – groups of 7-25 adolescents who regularly participate in activities to learn, have fun or take a break from stressful aspects of their lives, and to practice skills, express themselves, work together, and take action in their community.

- ▶ Facilitators can use another name for 'circle' if they prefer. Other names include 'team,' 'group,' and 'club.' Or, let adolescents create their own name for their circle.

### Why a 'Circle'?

Everyone fits in a Circle – no one is more or less important. Each member brings their ideas and skills to the Circle, and helps to strengthen it. By listening and supporting each other, members keep the Circle connected.

Circles work together to achieve group goals. This unites them. Ideally, members of a Circle develop a shared identity, even if their ethnic, religious, caste, or other identities differ. This shared identity needs to be fostered with care.

Circles are strong because they are flexible. If a new adolescent joins, the Circle can grow to include him or her as an equal member. If an adolescent needs to step out of the Circle—to help their family, work, or respond to other situations—the Circle shrinks but remains intact.

### Who should work together in a Circle?

#### Size

Keep the Circle size small. Adolescent Circles can include between 7 – 25 adolescents. Circles of this size allow all participants to share their thoughts and opinions during sessions, and get to know each other. They also allow facilitators to get to know each participant, provide them with support, and recognize their strengths, interests and needs. If there are more than 25 in a Circle, participants may feel less sense of belonging, and facilitators may find

it challenging to manage activities and keep participants engaged.

#### Age

Group adolescents by similar age. Circles usually function best if they include participants who are around the same age, so that activities and approaches can be created to fit their abilities and interests. When adolescents are with peers close to their own age, they may feel more comfortable raising and discussing certain topics.



#### Gender

Same-gender Circles often work best. Same-gender Circles provide adolescent girls and boys with a safe space to discuss and learn about topics that are important to them, including topics that may be sensitive or specific to their roles or other aspects of their development. Forming same-gender Circles can be essential to ensure access to and safety in programme activities in contexts in which it is not acceptable for adolescent boys and girls to interact.

#### Diversity

Form diverse circles. Beyond gender and age, circles should be diverse and should give adolescents a chance to connect with peers with different abilities, backgrounds and experiences. Circles should be inclusive, and should never reinforce discriminatory norms or attitudes. Facilitators (together with programme coordinators and others in the host community) should take care to ensure that the composition of Adolescent Circles does not prevent any adolescents from participating. However, when forming diverse Circles, they should also take care not to create conditions that adolescents are not prepared to handle safely. For example:

- ▶ **Remove social barriers to adolescents' participation– including those that are invisible.** In some contexts, adolescents may not be comfortable, or may not be supported or permitted by their families or communities, to participate in activities with adolescents of different ages, genders, roles or from other groups. For example, older adolescents may be embarrassed or uncomfortable joining Circles that appear to be for younger children. Adolescents who are married or are parents, and are seen as adults in their communities, may not be interested or permitted by their spouses to play with those who are unmarried and still 'children.' In these cases, forming separate Adolescent Circles for certain groups of adolescents may be a strategy to reduce or remove these barriers to their participation.

## Forming Adolescent Circles

- ▶ **Build peace, and be sensitive to conflict.** Learning with and from adolescents from different ethnicities, religions, or other backgrounds can create valuable opportunities for adolescents to develop empathy and respect, among other competencies. Forging positive relationships across these differences can also contribute to long-term possibilities for social cohesion and peace. However, in some conflict affected contexts, it may be challenging for adolescents from different backgrounds or experiences to come together. Work with the community to try to use Adolescent Circles as an opportunity for adolescents to get to know each other and enjoy the bonds that can grow from playing, learning and working together. Do not force adolescents from different groups together if this might exacerbate tensions or undermine the community's trust in your programme. (See [Investigate Adolescents' Situation](#) for guidance on questions to investigate when planning and implementing programmes for adolescents).
- ▶ **Support.** At least one, and ideally two facilitators should work together to support one Adolescent Circle.

# Building a strong Adolescent Circle

## Getting Started

Any group of adolescents needs support in forming a Circle. This is true of adolescents who have newly arrived in a community or just joined a programme, and are meeting each other for the first time. It may also be true of a group of adolescents who have been participating in activities together for some time, but have not yet had a chance to get to know each other, build trust, or feel connected to each other as a team.

The Planning Activity Phases section of the Facilitators' Guidance outlines steps that you can take and activities that you can use to work with adolescents to forming a strong, supportive Circle according to a pace that works for them. One valuable step you should take is helping them to agree to and use **group rules**.

## Setting group rules

In addition to setting goals for what they will do and achieve together, adolescents should form group agreements for how they will participate in their circles and work together. Adolescents coming together as a Circle should have a chance to discuss and agree to their rules during one of their first sessions together. The Agreeing to group rules activity can be a useful tool.

Giving adolescents the chance to set their own rules helps them to feel ownership of their Circle, and to feel secure as they start their work together. Group rules are also helpful when adolescents encounter challenges in their work. They provide a reference point for discussion. If possible, the group rules should be written down and posted somewhere visible during each session.

To decide their group rules, each Circle should answers to question such as:

- ▶ What will we do (or not do) to make sure that everyone feels equally included?
- ▶ Are there words, ways of talking to each other, or other actions that we agree never to use in our Circles?
- ▶ Are there things we will always do or never do in our Circles?
- ▶ Are there things we will always bring or never bring to our Circles?
- ▶ What will we say or not say, if someone says something

that we disagree with?

- ▶ If someone arrives late, how will we make sure that he or she feels welcome? What should he or she do to keep from interrupting the activity that we are already doing?
- ▶ If someone shares ideas or something they have made (such as a drawing or collage), how will we make sure they feel encouraged and respected?
- ▶ How will we talk with others outside our Circle about what we do in our sessions? Are there things that we discuss in our Circle that we agree to keep private or confidential?

Give adolescents a chance to use their own ideas as they discuss and agree to their rules. However, make sure that the rules are consistent with human rights principles, especially inclusion and non-discrimination. The Group rules tool gives more examples of rules that could work well for Circles in different phases.

As Circles continue in any of the four phases, members should take time for the Reviewing group rules activity to discuss their progress in using their rules. Just as with setting and reviewing group goals, new Adolescent Circles (in the Starting our Circle or Knowing Ourselves phases) may find it helpful to include a brief review of rules as one step in a session. Circles that have been working together for some time (such as those in the Connecting or Take Action phases) may find it helpful to take an entire session to review and possibly revise their group rules.

Facilitators may also suggest that an Adolescent Circle review their group rules if they have faced difficulties or disagreements while participating in activities together, or if any member feels hurt or excluded. Adolescents in the Circle can refer to their own agreements, to recognize when they have and have not successfully used the rules and to discuss possible changes. They can clarify, change, add or even remove rules from their agreement. This also provides adolescents with an opportunity to review what they have learned and accomplished.

## Tool: Dos and don'ts for setting group rules

### Do

- ✓ Remind adolescents to develop rules that ensure that all adolescents have a chance to participate and benefit equally from activities; Remind them to consider identity issues such as ethnicity, gender, religion and language 
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to discuss how they will welcome new members to the Circle
- ✓ Prompt adolescents to consider how some actions or practices could make their Circles less welcoming to some adolescents than others
  - For example, opening a session with a prayer or recitation from one religious faith may make adolescents from other religions, or those who do not practice a religion, feel less welcome;
  - and -playing a physical game without adaptation might make adolescents with a mobility-related disability feel less welcome 

### Don't

- ✗ Agree to a rule that will allow adolescents to insult, dominate or bully anyone, or exclude other adolescents (including members of the Circle and others who want to join)

### Sample rules for new Circles: Starting Our Circle or Knowing Ourselves

In our Circle we always:

- ▶ Try to come on time and stay for the whole session
- ▶ Try to pay attention and participate in activities
- ▶ Help anyone who arrives late to participate
- ▶ Speak one at a time, and listen actively when someone else is speaking
- ▶ Use body language and words to show kindness and respect, especially when someone is sharing ideas, a project, a performance, or anything else
- ▶ Encourage each other to try new things, especially things we aren't good at yet
- ▶ Talk and do activities with everyone in the Circle, even people we don't know or who are different from us
- ▶ Have the right not to speak or not to do something if we don't want to
- ▶ Talk with the Circle (if we feel comfortable) or the facilitator (if we need more support) if there is something that we don't like about our time in the Circle, and try to think of ways to make it better

In our Circle we never:

- ▶ Interrupt or distract each other from the activities
- ▶ Interrupt someone who is speaking, or keep others from speaking by talking too long
- ▶ Use body language or words that are insulting, disrespectful or mean, especially when someone is sharing ideas, something they made, or a performance
- ▶ Discourage each other from trying something new or practicing something they aren't good at yet
- ▶ Refuse to work with someone else in our Circle or act as if we don't want to work with them

### Sample rules for advanced Circles: Connecting or Taking Action

In our Circle we always:

- ▶ Come to every session if possible – When we can't come to a session we let others in the Circle know why we aren't there, and that they can still work on activities and projects without us. Try to pay attention and participate in activities
- ▶ Participate actively and positively in our activities and projects
- ▶ Share our ideas and opinions openly and respectfully
- ▶ Support and encourage others to share their ideas openly and respectfully
- ▶ Are willing to work on different kinds of projects and activities, including things that are not our own idea and/or tasks that we don't like – We take turns with different types of roles and tasks
- ▶ Speak and behave in ways that are kind, respectful and encouraging to everyone in the Circle
- ▶ Work together and try to find a solution if we disagree or have different ideas
- ▶ Speak with each other if something is bothering us, and try to find a solution – If we are not comfortable speaking with the whole group, we talk with the facilitator in private
- ▶ Keep private or personal things about other Circle members confidential, especially if they or the facilitator asks us to
- ▶ Plan, work together and choose project ideas in a fair and equal way that reflects and includes everyone's ideas

In our Circle we never:

- ▶ Speak or behave in a way that is unkind, disrespectful, discouraging or unwelcoming to anyone

- ▶ Share anything we learn or hear about another Circle member with other people outside the Circle if it is private or personal, especially if they or the facilitator asks us to respect their confidentiality
- ▶ Keep silent about our feelings if there is something happening in our Circle that we do not like or agree with

### Supporting Circles

Facilitators play a key role in shaping strong Circles. They help adolescents feel safe in their Circles, so that Circles become a space where adolescents recover from difficult experiences, take a break from stress, and feel welcome and valued by others. A strong Circle is a place where adolescents can express their thoughts and opinions, explore ideas, experiment, and try new things without feeling embarrassed. In a strong Circle, adolescents may turn disagreements and disappointments into positive relationships and learning.

Some of the most important things facilitators do to support adolescents in building safe, strong Circles are to plan sessions and activity phases that create structure and routine for adolescents, while also giving them the opportunity to have fun, learn, and take action. Strategies and steps for those important aspects of a facilitator's role are included in the other sections of the Facilitator's Guidance. In all of their work with and for adolescents, facilitators should always:

- ▶ Use Ten Key Approaches to support adolescents' wellbeing, learning and positive engagement with each other and the world around them;
- ▶ Communicate regularly with their programme coordinator and ask for support when needed;
- ▶ Communicate regularly with adolescents adults in the community, with support from the programme coordinators (see Involve adolescents and the community);

## Tool: Keeping circles safe and strong

Watch and listen to ensure that adolescents interact in positive ways and try to identify problems early on, before they become difficult to resolve. Take action to transform these situations into positive opportunities.

Keeping Circles safe In any Circle, adolescents will occasionally disagree or argue. They may insult each other, speak insensitively, or treat each other unkindly. Adolescents need support to learn from these moments, so that they can resolve their conflicts and develop positive working relationships. Use the steps below to work with adolescents to solve their problems. However, remember that some challenges may require extra resources and support. Make sure to follow the last set of steps if problems continue or worsen.

If an adolescent isn't interacting with others:

- ▶ Encourage them to join the others.
- ▶ Introduce them to other adolescents with similar personalities or interests.
- ▶ Encourage other adolescents to actively welcome them into their activities.
- ▶ Speak with them privately. If there is a problem, try to resolve it so that they can participate confidently in the circle. If not, support their choice to participate quietly or passively, remembering that this may be part of their adjustment or recovery process.
- ▶ Recognize the warning signs of severe mental health issues or emotional distress, and follow guidelines for linking adolescents to the appropriate services.

If an adolescent insults or mistreats someone:

- ▶ Take action to stop their insults or unkind behaviour immediately, but try not to single them out or embarrass anyone involved. Do not react dramatically or escalate the situation.
- ▶ It may help to move the adolescents involved away from each other. Do this in a way that it doesn't seem like they are being punished or scolded

- ▶ Take time outside the Circle to talk privately with the adolescents involved. Try to find out what happened and what led to their behaviour. Ask each of them for their perspective.
- ▶ Work with them to brainstorm ways that they can change their behaviour and repair their relationship.
- ▶ Give them the opportunity to resolve the problem in their own way (if they want to).
- ▶ Encourage the Circle to be safe and include everyone, and ask the other members to share their own hopes for a safe Circle.
- ▶ Remember that if you don't respond to unkind behaviour within the Circle, the adolescents will understand this as support. Every session if possible – When we can't come to a session we let others in the Circle know why we aren't there, and that they can still work on activities and projects without us. Try to pay attention and participate in activities

If a group of adolescents has an argument or disagreement:

- ▶ Try to let them resolve the conflict themselves, using the skills they have developed.
- ▶ Get involved in a conflict if adolescents appear very angry or upset, seem stuck in their disagreement, and/or if it seems to be getting worse. Shouting, crying, insults or threats are clear signs that a conflict has become too difficult for the adolescents to handle, and that they need support.
- ▶ Give the adolescents involved in the argument a chance to calm down. It may be helpful to move them to different parts of the space so that they can take a break from each other. Ask one of them to help with a different task so that they can step away without embarrassment.
- ▶ Always inform the programme coordinator if there is a risk that the argument might turn into physical violence inside or outside the session.

## Tool: Keeping circles safe and strong

- ▶ Follow up later to support the adolescents in addressing their conflict. In most cases it is best to start with a private, supported discussion between the adolescents involved. However, stronger Circles and more mature adolescents may want to include all of the Circle members in the reconciliation process.
- ▶ Recognize that conflicts are part of any relationship, and are an opportunity to learn. Remind adolescents that they should be proud of their ability to learn from conflicts, and not see them as weakness or failure.

If adolescents continue to insult or mistreat each other:

- ▶ Keep an open line of communication with all of the individuals involved. Let them know that you are concerned.
- ▶ Consult them individually, outside the sessions if possible. Try to find out why they are behaving this way and ask all of them for their perspectives.
- ▶ Consider using the Reviewing group rules activity as a way to involve all of the adolescents in strengthening the Circle. Create new rules to help the Circle to work better together, and discuss how the members can support each other to follow the rules.

If conflicts continue, or escalate too quickly to take the above steps, ALWAYS:

- ▶ Make sure the programme coordinator is aware of the problem. Consult them before developing any major response to the issue.
- ▶ Follow programme guidelines for the adolescents' protection, if there are concerns about their health, safety or wellbeing.
- ▶ Consider informing parents and asking for their support.
- ▶ Try to keep adolescents informed if seeking support from their parents or other community members.
- ▶ Consider accessing outside services or support that might be helpful, such as counselling or

mediation.

- ▶ Encourage adolescents to practice activities that reduce stress.
- ▶ Encourage adolescents to feel positive about receiving outside help, and to see it as a way of being cared for and valued by others.
- ▶ Recognize that facilitating adolescents is challenging, and that requesting extra support does not mean you have failed in your role.

# Circle Self-Assessment

The facilitator should help adolescent circles use this tool. Adolescents should decide as a circle when they are ready to move from one phase to another. They can use this self-assessment tool to discuss how they feel as a circle, choosing the box in each line that describes them best.

The number in each box corresponds to the four phases. See which circle adolescents choose most in their self-assessment to decide which phase they should be in.

Use the Circle Self-assessment activity with this tool.

## How do we feel during our time in the circle?

1

Some of us are very quiet and tired when we come to our circles, and some of us have a lot of energy. We enjoy short, fun activities that let us feel calm and also let us be energetic.

2

We come to our circle in different moods, but we feel interested in trying activities that will give us more time to focus, practice, and talk with each other.

3

When we come to the circle, we feel comfortable and ready to try challenging things. We are ready to spend our time working as a team, and not only on individual projects.

4

When we come to our circle we feel ready to work together on challenging things. Even when we come to our sessions in different moods we can manage our feelings and enjoy our work together.

## What kind of activities are fun and interesting for us?

1

We want to play games and to have fun when we come to the circle. We are happy, not bored, and want to use this time for energetic and quiet activities.

2

We are interested in learning new skills, practicing different ways to express ourselves, and experimenting.

3

We want to do more activities that help us work well with each other, build and make things, and learn about the people and world around us.

4

We want to design and carry out projects together, based on our own ideas. Doing challenging and more complicated activities helps us to feel interested and excited.

## How consistent is our attendance and participation in our circles?

1

There are a lot of different adolescents coming to the sessions.

2

We see the same adolescents at most sessions, but there are some new faces and/or some people who don't come to every session.

3

We see most of the same adolescents at every session.

4

We see most of the same adolescents at every session. If someone is absent we always know why. If new participants arrive we can bring them into the group.

## How well do we all know each other?

1

Most of us don't know each other's names yet.

2

We know each other's names, but most of us don't know each other very well yet. For example, most of us would not be able to talk about the interests and strengths of others in our circle.

3

We all know each other's names and have learned more about each other. For example, we can all describe at least one strength and one interest of each person in our circle.

4

All of us know each other's names, strengths and interests. We feel like a team and are friends.

## How well do we work together as a circle?

1

We don't know each other well enough to work together easily on activities or projects. Sometimes we feel shy, and when we have different ideas about how to do things it makes it difficult for us to work together.

2

We know each other well enough to have fun working together on activities. Sometimes some of us prefer to work on activities individually. When we feel shy, or have different ideas about how to do things, we need the facilitator to help us solve our problems and to have fun.

3

We usually like to do things together in our circle. Sometimes when we have trouble working together we can solve our own problems. Other times the facilitator helps us to solve our problems together and have fun.

4

We work well together, even when we are doing complicated and challenging things. When we disagree we can work things out ourselves.

## What knowledge and skills do we have for knowing ourselves and working together?

1

We don't know many words or other ways to express and describe ourselves, including our feelings, strengths or interests.

2

Some of us know and use different words to describe our feelings, strengths and interests. However, most of us are still learning about ourselves, and learning new ways to express and explain ourselves.

3

Most of us can describe our feelings, strengths and interests. We can express these in different ways to each other. We have learned a lot about each other's similarities and differences, and we use this understanding to help us work well together.

4

Almost all of us can express our feelings, strengths and interests in different ways. We use our understanding of our strengths and differences to help us work together as a team and to come up with ideas for positive things that we can do in our community.

## What knowledge and skills do we have for leading our own projects and activities?

1

We would feel overwhelmed or bored if someone asked us to try planning an activity or project. We don't know the steps we would take if we had to plan an activity or project ourselves.

2

We would like to try planning and working on some easy group and individual projects. We want the facilitator to show us the steps needed for planning.

3

We are ready to learn and try planning projects together. We want the facilitator to help us when we have trouble, and to make sure we have a plan that can work.

4

We know how to plan and carry out projects together. If the facilitator tries to give us too much support, it slows us down.

## What ideas do we have for our sessions, activities and projects?

1

We don't feel ready to suggest ideas and activities for our sessions, and we like it when the facilitator uses their own ideas.

2

We can tell the facilitator about some of our interests so that they can plan activities that we like for our sessions. We also like it when the facilitator uses their own ideas to plan sessions.

3

We have a lot of ideas and interests for our sessions, and we work with the facilitator to plan activities based on these ideas. We also like it when the facilitator uses their own ideas to plan sessions since it helps us to learn and experience new things.

4

We have a lot of interests and ideas for our activities and projects. Most of the time we don't need the facilitator to suggest new activities, but sometimes it is fun when they do something new to reenergize us.



# **PLANNING GUIDANCE AND TOOLS**



## TOOL. Possible entry points for the Adolescent Kit

Use the list below for guidance as you consider an entry point for introducing the Adolescent Kit.

**Remember!** The first step is to find (or set up) a suitable entry point programme. Then consider how you can use the activities, tools and approaches in the Adolescent Kit to make the programme more effective for adolescents.

### Education, school and life skills programmes

You can use the tools and activities in the Adolescent Kit to strengthen both formal and non-formal programmes that focus on improving children's or adolescents' education and learning. For example, you can integrate activities and tools into:

- ▶ School classes on literacy, life skills, social studies, guidance counselling or art;
- ▶ Extra-curricular activities such as after-school clubs or arts programmes;
- ▶ Non-formal education programmes, such as life skills, peer-to-peer, mentoring and tutoring schemes, which may take place outside of the classroom in community centres, NGOs or village councils.

### Child protection programmes

Activities and tools in the Adolescent Kit can be used in child protection programmes, particularly to build on (or establish new) initiatives that focus on improving adolescent girls' and boys' psychosocial wellbeing and resilience. This includes :

- ▶ Child Friendly Spaces<sup>1</sup> ;
- ▶ Child participation and child resilience projects;
- ▶ Children, adolescent, or youth clubs, organisations or committees;
- ▶ Community child protection committees or networks.<sup>2</sup>

### Peacebuilding education and advocacy programmes

The activities and tools in the Adolescent Kit can help adolescents to explore and understand the conflicts that affect them, foster positive connections with adults, contribute to their communities and learn inclusive, respectful ways of working with others. This makes the Adolescent Kit a good fit for peacebuilding education and advocacy programmes that specifically target children and young people. This includes:

- ▶ Initiatives that focus on building knowledge, attitudes and skills that can help adolescents to resolve conflict and build peace in their communities;
- ▶ Peace or mediation clubs;
- ▶ Community development/service projects;
- ▶ Interfaith/intergenerational initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> Child Friendly Spaces are safe spaces where children, usually below the age of 10, can access free and structured play, recreation, leisure and learning activities, and which may provide education and psychosocial support: Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

<sup>2</sup> Child protection committees or networks are groups made up of community members who work to advocate for children's rights, and to protect them from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

## Youth development programmes

The tools and activities in the Adolescent Kit can be integrated into youth development programmes that focus on empowering adolescent girls and boys. For example:

- ▶ Peer-to-peer and youth resilience initiatives;
- ▶ Youth clubs and centres;
- ▶ Community development/service projects;
- ▶ Mentoring and tutoring schemes.

## Sports, arts and recreation initiatives

You can enhance sports, arts and recreation programmes in humanitarian settings by using the resources in the Adolescent Kit to add an additional focus on arts and innovation. For example, you can use the activities and tools in:

- ▶ Initiatives that focus on sports, games, physical exercise and recreation;
- ▶ Community art, theatre, and street drama projects;
- ▶ Projects that support children or adolescents to express themselves through art, music, dance, and drama.

## Children and adolescent clubs, organizations, committees

The approaches and activities in the Adolescent Kit can help adolescents to set up their own clubs or initiatives (or to strengthen their existing ones), by supporting them to work in participatory, inclusive ways, empowering them to express themselves, and helping them to address challenges. These include:

- ▶ Child/adolescent clubs;
- ▶ Child protection/child rights/education/peace committees;
- ▶ Child/adolescent led initiatives that focus on community development, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response.

## Any programme or initiative that includes children and adolescents

You can use the activities and approaches in the Adolescent Kit to complement or strengthen the focus on adolescents in nearly any programme. Areas of particular concern to adolescent girls and boys may include:

- ▶ Reproductive health
- ▶ HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Gender equality, women's empowerment and gender based violence
- ▶ Mine action
- ▶ Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Disaster risk reduction
- ▶ Vocational training and economic empowerment

**Note:** The resources in the Adolescent Kit are designed to support adolescents' development of competencies – essential skills they need to engage positively with the world around them and pursue their own priorities. If a goal of your programme is to promote adolescents' knowledge of information related to the topics above, find and integrate educational materials to complement the resources offered in the kit. The Standards, Guidance and Resources section of the Foundation Guidance offers some additional educational resources that may be useful for programmes focused on some of these topics.

## Tool: Getting the timing right for adolescents

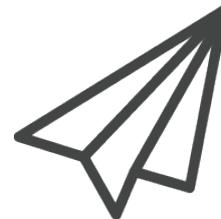
Use the questions below to guide you with organizing activities at times that suit adolescents and don't present barriers to their involvement in your intervention.

- ▶ How do adolescent girls and boys spend their time?
- ▶ When do adolescent girls and boys go to school, socialise, work, pray, relax, eat meals, do household chores, mind siblings or their own children?
- ▶ Are there days of the week when adolescents have more or less free time? (For example, weekends).
- ▶ When do adolescents have free time when they aren't busy with other activities?
- ▶ Are there times of the day and week when adolescents are unoccupied and bored?
- ▶ Are there particular times when adolescents engage in unhealthy or unsafe behaviours such as playing in the street, swimming in unsafe areas, smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs?
- ▶ Are there times of the day when adolescents wait for long periods of time for work, for food or non-food-item distribution, at washrooms or showers, or at community kitchens?
- ▶ If adolescents have limited free time to participate in activities, is it possible to arrange a break for them to participate in Adolescent Kit activities by talking to their parents, family members or others?

## Tool: Creating a safe space

**Spaces should be safe, comfortable and conducive to adolescents' participation in activities. Be creative! As long as basic conditions are in place, it is often possible to make activity spaces safe and welcoming without too much effort.**

Ask the following questions when assessing whether a space is appropriate for introducing the activities, approaches and supplies in the Adolescent Kit.



### Finding a space

- ▶ Are there any safe, adolescent-friendly spaces already available in the entry point programme or within other programmes and institutions in the community? Possibilities may include classrooms, assembly rooms, playgrounds, child-friendly spaces, youth or community centres.
- ▶ Does the community have spaces that could be 'borrowed' by adolescents? For example, places of worship (e.g. churches or mosques), community halls, local businesses, or out door areas in compounds.
- ▶ Are there any vacant or unused spaces? For example, fields, lots or parks.

### Accessibility of the space

- ▶ Is the space located somewhere that adolescent boys and girls can access safely?
- ▶ Is the space near where adolescents live or spend their time?
- ▶ How long will it take for adolescents to travel to the space? Will it cost them any money?
- ▶ What routes will adolescent girls and boys need to take to get to the space? How safe are these travel routes?
- ▶ Are there safe forms of transportation available to the adolescents?

### Location of the space

- ▶ Are adolescents free of distractions from their surroundings?
- ▶ Is the space sheltered from onlookers? (This may be particularly important for girls).
- ▶ Could the adolescents cause disturbance to others nearby with their playing, talking, singing or shouting?
- ▶ Is the space near other programmes and services that adolescents could benefit from, such as schools or health clinics?
- ▶ Is the space removed from places where adolescents feel uncomfortable or unsafe or that they wish to avoid?

## Size, safety and comfort of the space

- ▶ Can adolescents move around comfortably and safely in the space?
- ▶ Is the space large enough for the adolescents to run, jump and move freely during high-energy activities?
- ▶ Can adolescents focus, relax and interact during quiet activities in the space?
- ▶ Is the space very hot, very cold, or very wet – in general, or in certain weather or seasons?
- ▶ Is the space free of obstacles or hazards such as broken glass, sharp rocks, mud adolescents could slip on or things they could trip over? Has it been cleared for land mines or unexploded ordinances (UXOs) (if applicable)?
- ▶ Is the space clean and free of conditions that might contribute to illness or disease (e.g. mud, standing water or rubbish)?
- ▶ Is the space clean and dry enough for adolescents to write, draw, and work on art or other projects?
- ▶ Is there enough room to use supplies, materials and equipment to work on projects?
- ▶ Can adolescents store notes or projects in the space?



## Hand-washing and toilet facilities

- ▶ Is there somewhere for adolescents to wash their hands with soap and water– either in the space or nearby? Do adolescents (particularly girls) feel safe accessing these hand-washing facilities?
- ▶ Are there clean, safe and private toilets or latrines – either in the space or nearby?
- ▶ Are there separate toilets or latrines for boys and girls? Are they accessible for those with disabilities?
- ▶ Can the toilets/latrines be locked from the inside? Do adolescents (particularly girls) feel safe and comfortable using these toilets or latrines?
- ▶ Is there somewhere to post a sign that encourages adolescents to wash their hands before and after sessions?

Make sure to pay attention to the different needs and situations of adolescent girls, boys, those with disabilities, younger and older age groups, and adolescents from different social, ethnic and religious groups.

Refer to the Child Protection section of **Resources** for more information and support on developing Child/Adolescent Friendly Spaces.



Adolescents benefit from space for creativity and fun, balanced by structure and routine as they are learning, playing and working together. Knowing what to expect, and what will be expected of them, helps them to focus and engage in activities, interact positively with each other, and feel confident and ready to take on challenges such as sharing their ideas or trying new skills. To make adolescents' activity time supportive, safe and helpful, facilitators should plan it with a consistent sequence of steps, so that every session includes opportunities for adolescents to work independently, connect with others in their Circle and share their progress. These session steps should also include processes for facilitators to learn about each adolescent participant in a Circle, and to monitor and assess the entire Adolescent Circle's progress as the adolescents participate in programmes or interventions and pursue their goals together.



### What is a session?

A session is the period of time when an Adolescent Circle meets and participates in activities together. A session should follow a set of steps that is used routinely each time a Circle meets. In this guidance, eight steps are recommended. Sessions and steps should be adapted to each Circle's particular needs. The duration and structure of sessions and session steps may change as adolescents work on different activities and phases together.

appropriate; whereas adolescents in the 'Connecting' and 'Take Action' phases may want more time for the last few steps. Be flexible – follow the routine created by the steps, but do not stick to it rigidly, if doing so makes activities less interesting or more limiting for adolescents. If you will not be including all eight steps, consider how you can achieve the same goals with different processes.

### How long should a session last?

A session should usually last between one to two hours. For adolescents the 'Starting our Circle' or 'Knowing Ourselves' phases – which may include younger adolescents, or adolescents adjusting to a new context or environment – shorter sessions may be more appropriate for their attention span. Adolescents in the 'Connecting' or 'Take Action' phase may prefer longer sessions that give them an opportunity to work together on activities that require more time or discussion. Session times may also be adjusted to accommodate adolescents' daily routines and responsibilities. For example, adolescents with other important responsibilities such as work, domestic chores, or studies may not have time to participate in long activity sessions. (See Investigate Adolescents Situations for strategies to understand and adjust programmes and interventions so that they are accessible for adolescents, especially those hardest to reach).

### Planning a Session: Eight session steps

Facilitators can use the following eight steps to plan a session for adolescents, adapting each step to your specific context and program. Eight steps may sound like a lot to include in one or two hours, but some steps take just a few minutes, while others – especially the Challenge step, which is the main activity of any session – take up most of the session time. Each of the steps serves an important purpose for the Adolescent Circle. As you start to plan sessions, understand how each step might work and how it might be helpful. Prepare to adapt the steps to adolescents' interests and contexts, especially with respect to timing. As noted above, for adolescents in the 'Starting our Circle' and 'Knowing Ourselves' phases, shorter steps may be more

# Planning Sessions

**Step**                      **Time Frame**                      **Description**

1



Opening circle

5 minutes  
(more if the adolescents want a ritual that takes longer).

The Opening Circle is practiced at the beginning of each session and makes everyone feel welcome as they start their session together. It should be simple and easy, and give all adolescents in the Circle a chance to participate equally and actively. Opening Circles often involve physical activity to help adolescents feel alert and energized. Some Circles prefer to hold the same Opening Circle at the beginning of every session to provide a sense of ritual and predictability.

**Examples:**

- a song, a chant, a dance, a name game, an exercise routine, anything else fun, simple, energizing and welcoming.

2



Remind & refresh

5-10 minutes  
depending on whether a thorough review and update is necessary.

During the Remind and Refresh step, adolescents review what they learned in the previous session. This includes discussing what activities they did in the previous session.

**Examples:**

- Adolescents share memories from the last session, including enjoyable moments, special achievements of adolescents in the Circle, or important things they learned.
- One adolescent can role-play the character of a 'reporter,' interviewing adolescents about what they remember or learned in the last session.
- Adolescent Circles working together on long-term projects (such the Taking Action cycle) review any progress they have made in their last sessions, and update Circle members who have missed sessions.

3



Warm up

10-15 minutes

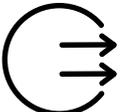
The Warm-Up is a short activity at the start of the session. The warm-up activity should engage participants in either energetic or quiet activities. The warm-up should be simple and easy for participants to follow.

**Examples:**

- Energizers – short, simple games - can be used in the warm-up step to bring participants together in a fun and engaging way. See the Energizers in the Activity Box for ideas!

	Step	Time Frame	Description
<p>4</p>	 <p>Explanation &amp; discussion</p>	<p>5-10 minutes</p>	<p>The Explanation and Discussion step is a moment of transition between the Warm-Up and the Challenge steps. Adolescents discuss what they experienced and learned during the Warm-Up, and the facilitator explains what the adolescents will do during the Challenge step, which is the main activity of each session. The Explanation and Discussion step involves more talking than action. It should be adapted to adolescents' interests and attention spans. Do not push adolescents to sit, talk and listen for a long time, especially if this will stifle their energy after the Warm-Up activity. Give The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation IV. Section 3. How to Plan a Session 5 adolescents enough time to understand what they will be doing during the Challenge step, and a chance to ask questions if they need more clarification.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize what was learned in the Warm-Up activity then provide instructions for the Challenge activity. (Most Activity Cards begin with these instructions).</li> </ul>
<p>5</p>	 <p>Challenge</p>	<p>20-60 minutes or longer</p>	<p>The Challenge step is the main activity of each session. It usually takes up the majority of adolescents' time in any session. The Challenge step can be a simple activity that adolescents carry out and complete during one session. The Challenge step can be used to practice a skill they learned in a previous session, or to continue an individual or group project that they work on over the course of several sessions. For those that are in the 'Starting our Circle' and 'Knowing Ourselves' phases, the Challenge step might be different every day. Adolescents in the 'Knowing Ourselves' cycle might use the Challenge step to work on drawings, collages, or other individual projects they started in an earlier session. Adolescents working on group projects in the 'Taking Action cycle' can use the Challenge step to plan and work together.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Activity Box provides 50 activities that can be used for the Challenge step in sessions for adolescents in the four activity phases.</li> <li>For adolescents in the 'Starting our Circle' phase, the Energizer Cards also give ideas for simple, fun activities for this step.</li> <li>Facilitators and adolescents who are ready for a new kind of challenge can also use the Inspiration Cards for ideas for activities to try together.</li> </ul>

# Planning Sessions

Step	Time Frame	Description
<div style="text-align: center;">6</div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">  <p data-bbox="255 705 351 750">Sharing</p>  <p data-bbox="255 907 383 940">Take away</p> </div>	<p data-bbox="446 571 638 616"><b>10-20</b> minutes</p> <p data-bbox="446 638 678 728">or longer if needed for more in-depth sharing and feedback.</p>	<ul data-bbox="742 403 1380 504" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitators can also adapt or improvise new activities based on all of the guides and cards in the Activity Box, or use the Activity Template to create new ideas.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="742 571 1380 963">The Sharing and Take Away step is a time for adolescents to share what they have done during the Challenge step with others in their Circle and show, write or draw what they have taken away from their time together. This step provides facilitators with a valuable chance to assess adolescents' learning and progress toward their goals. It may be helpful to hold longer, more in-depth Sharing and Take Away discussions or learning assessments every few sessions instead of or in addition to at each session. The Sharing and Take Away step can be connected with the Review step, which can also be helpful for adolescents who have already been working together as a group.</p> <p data-bbox="742 974 845 1008"><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul data-bbox="742 1019 1380 1187" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If adolescents are working on individual projects, they can look at each other's work and share feedback using the Gallery walk tool. If they have been doing activities in small groups, they can tell each other what they did and compare experiences.</li> </ul>
<div style="text-align: center;">7</div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">  <p data-bbox="255 1388 343 1422">Review</p> </div>	<p data-bbox="446 1254 574 1299"><b>5</b> minutes</p> <p data-bbox="446 1321 702 1377">unless adolescents want more time.</p>	<p data-bbox="742 1254 1380 1422">During the Review step, adolescents share their feelings and opinions about the whole session. This is a chance for facilitators check whether adolescents are enjoying the sessions, and whether adolescents feel that the sessions are helping to make progress toward their goals.</p> <p data-bbox="742 1433 1380 1657">As with the Sharing and Take Away step, some Circles may want to take extra time for a more in-depth review process every few sessions, instead of or in addition to including it as a step in each session. The Reviewing progress toward group goals activity can be useful for this. The Reviewing group rules activity also helps adolescents to discuss what they can do to make sessions more fun and rewarding.</p> <p data-bbox="742 1668 845 1702"><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul data-bbox="742 1713 1380 1960" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask adolescents to show how much did or did not enjoy a session by standing on a real or imaginary line that reaches from one end of the space to the other. One end of the line should represent '100% enjoyment' and the other should represent '0% enjoyment.'</li> <li>Ask adolescents to share a one word description of how a session made them feel, either verbally or in writing.</li> </ul>

## Step

## Time Frame

## Description

8



Closing circle

5 minutes

- Adolescents can use the Emotion Cube to show how they feel at the end of the session.

The Closing Circle is practiced at the end of every session. It brings adolescents together to close their time together. It reminds all of the adolescents that they are equal and important members of the Circle, and that their participation in the day's session was important. A closing ritual can be a song, a chant, a dance, a game, an exercise routine, or anything else fun, energizing and welcoming. It should be the same every day. Adolescents can invent their own closing circle ritual, and change it whenever they want. Some adolescents may prefer to have the same activity for both the Opening and Closing Circle.

**Example:** Adolescents create a closing circle song and sing it at the end of every session.

# Session Planning Template

Session Step	Time	Facilitator Instructions
Opening Circle	5 Minutes	
Review	5 Minutes	
Warm-up Activity/Energizer Choose from Energizers or create your own.	10 Minutes	
Explanation and Discussion	5 Minutes	
Challenge Activity Use an Activity Guide from the from the Activity Box	30 Minutes	
Sharing and Takeaway Note: If a challenge activity was chosen from the activity guide, this section will also be included.	10 Minutes	
Review	5 Minutes	
Closing Circle	5 Minutes	

## Community Project Ideas

	Simple	Challenging
<b>Gardening</b>	Adolescents create a small garden inside their activity space using discarded water bottles. This could be a 'vertical garden,' using discarded water bottles attached to a wall or sturdy wooden pallet.	Adolescents create and maintain a community garden. The food they produce can be sold to raise funds for their other projects or needs (such as school fees), or for community meals.
<b>Clean-up</b>	Adolescents clean up a space they will use (such as their own activity space) or that will be used by others in the community.	Adolescents find a space in their community that is not being used, and create a park, garden or recreational area. Adolescents organize a regular clean-up of the space.
<b>Arts exhibits and murals</b>	Adolescents organize a display of their own artwork, and invite parents, family members and others from the community.	Adolescents organize regular exhibitions of their own art work, and artwork created by others in the community.
<b>Murals</b>	Adolescents create temporary murals and drawings on sidewalks or building walls using chalk.	Adolescents identify a publicly visible wall in the community, and with permission from the community leaders, paint a mural on it.
<b>Traditional music and dance</b>	Adolescents learn and practice traditional music, songs and/or dance as a regular activity in their circles. Traditional songs, music, chants or dance could be part of the opening and closing rituals of an Adolescent Circle.	Adolescents can form a traditional music or dance group. Find experts in the community who can share their knowledge of traditional songs or dances, or of how to play instruments.  Adolescents improvise by creating new songs or dances about topics of interest to young people and others in the community.  Adolescents organize performances for the community to attend.
<b>Theater troupe</b>	Adolescents use role plays during their sessions to explore different topics or invent creative stories.	Adolescents create an original drama based on a role play or story they invented.
<b>Library</b>	Adolescents bring their own books or magazines to their sessions to share with each other. Schools or families in the community may also be willing to lend books or magazines to adolescents to read during their sessions, especially if they know that adolescents will take care of them and return them.	Adolescents create a library for themselves and others to use, gathering donated books, and finding or borrowing a space that is safe and available.  Adolescents organize a story-time to read books or share stories. This could include reading books to younger children, and/or hearing traditional stories from elders.  Adolescents organize a book club in which all members read the same book and discuss it together.

## Community Project Ideas

	Simple	Challenging
<b>Exercise and sport</b>	Adolescents use their session time for exercise. This could include doing an exercise routine for their opening or closing rituals, or dedicating a regular session to running, walking or other exercise.	Adolescents organize a running club or another exercise class for themselves and/or others in the community.  Adolescents organize sport clubs, reaching out to an adult in the community who can coach them or lead 'clinics' for them to develop their skills.
<b>Food and meals</b>	If food and kitchen space can be shared, adolescents can practice cooking skills as one of their activities.  An Adolescent Circle can organize a celebratory meal to share members' favorite dishes. Especially if participants are from different cultural backgrounds, this can be an opportunity to learn about each others' traditions.	Adolescents organize a regular meal to share with others in the community. Use the meal as a chance to build connections with other young people who are not being reached by your programme, or with adults.  Adolescents can bring meals to community members who lack support, are recovering from illness or injury, or have difficulty moving outside their homes or shelters.
<b>Exploration and expedition</b>	Adolescents organize a nature walk or learning tour in or around their community.	Adolescents organize a welcome and orientation tour for new arrivals in their community so they will be able to navigate safely, and know where they can find essential services.
<b>Cultural knowledge</b>	Adolescents invite an older member of their community to teach them a traditional skill, such as craftmaking, arts or other practical skills, or to share stories from their tradition.	Adolescents work with adults to create courses in traditional skills, or establish clubs or groups where they can learn and practice those skills regularly.  Adolescents gather traditional stories and create a book or a performance based on them.
<b>Supporting others and building connections</b>	Adolescents brainstorm kind or helpful acts they can do for other young people or adults in their community, and carry out those acts outside their session times.	Adolescents identify community members who would benefit from support, such as those who are recovering from illness or injury, older people who have been separated from their families, or others, and organize plans to visit them and offer company or practical support.



# **FACILITATION GUIDANCE AND TOOLS**

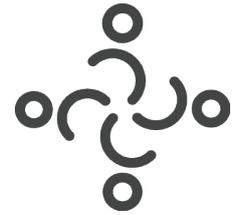


## Tool: Creating positive and inclusive ways of working

**Every adolescent girl and boy should have the opportunity to participate equally in activities with the Adolescent Kit.**

Encouraging inclusive participation doesn't mean forcing adolescents to participate in activities when they don't want to, or making them contribute to every group discussion. However, it does mean being aware of adolescents' different needs and abilities, and making sure that they can participate if they want to. It also means finding ways to overcome stigma or discrimination toward particular groups, such as girls, adolescents with disabilities, children affected by HIV and AIDS, and others.

Use this tool to create an environment where every adolescent girl and boy feels comfortable, and is able to participate in activities on an equal footing with others in their group.



### Do

- ▶ Call each of the participants by name
- ▶ Group adolescents with different backgrounds, experiences and skills, (including girls and boys with disabilities, and the most vulnerable adolescents) so that they can learn from each other
- ▶ Support adolescents to set rules for working together that give everyone a say in decisions, and that encourage girls and boys to listen to each other
- ▶ Give every participant an equal opportunity to voice their opinion, take on tasks and roles, and to participate in activities
- ▶ Plan a mix of energetic/restful, creative/problem solving and other activities so that everyone gets to do something they enjoy or are good at
- ▶ Vary activities so that adolescents with different skills and abilities have opportunities to participate and no one is forced to sit on the side lines – for example, if you play football (which adolescents with physical disabilities may not be able to participate in equally, or girls in some cultures may not find of interest), make sure that you also organise other, different types of activities that other participants may enjoy
- ▶ Tailor activities to adolescents' age and abilities, and adjust them if they seem bored, frustrated or overwhelmed
- ▶ Consult with adolescents to determine if activities are accessible and enjoyable for everyone involved
- ▶ Do teambuilding activities that encourage adolescents to make joint decisions and work together
- ▶ Focus on activities that allow adolescents to share and celebrate their different backgrounds, abilities and cultures
- ▶ Create a light, positive atmosphere where everyone is valued and all contributions are acceptable (as long as they meet the group rules)
- ▶ Smile, make jokes, be friendly and kind
- ▶ Make adolescents feel valued and respected
- ▶ Encourage adolescents to take turns
- ▶ Encourage all members of the group to feel that everyone's contributions are of interest
- ▶ Observe and interpret adolescents' responses – verbal or non-verbal
- ▶ Invite (but don't force) quieter participants to speak up or participate
- ▶ Let everyone voice their opinion, take on tasks and roles and participate in activities

## Do

- ▶ Find ways to adapt activities for adolescents who may be less literate, have disabilities or are very shy about participating
- ▶ Respect adolescents' religious and ethnic backgrounds and give them space for prayer time if appropriate
- ▶ Make sure that activities are accessible and appropriate for girls, adolescents with disabilities and other marginalized groups
- ▶ Check that the activity space is accessible and safe to adolescents with disabilities (for example, for those with wheelchairs or assistive devices)

## Don't

- ▶ Make assumptions about what different groups of adolescents can and cannot do (e.g. girls or those with disabilities)
- ▶ Discriminate against adolescents based on their gender, religion, background or abilities
- ▶ Form 'disabilities only' groups or circles
- ▶ Favour some adolescents over others
- ▶ Ignore some adolescents' contributions
- ▶ Dominate the conversation
- ▶ Force ideas onto adolescents, preach, lecture or dictate what should be discussed
- ▶ Let anyone monopolise activities or discussions
- ▶ Pass judgement, criticize or make anyone feel ashamed, embarrassed or inferior
- ▶ Allow anyone to be isolated, bullied or ridiculed or prevented from taking part in activities
- ▶ Let adolescents interrupt or talk over each other
- ▶ Pressure anyone to participate in activities or discussions if they seem very shy or resistant to do so

## Tool: Sample Code of Conduct for facilitators

Use the sample Code of Conduct below as guidance for developing your own.

### Facilitators should always:

- ▶ Use the Ten Key Approaches when facilitating sessions with adolescents
- ▶ Arrive at least 15 minutes before their sessions start
- ▶ Contact their supervisor immediately if they are going to be late or absent, and/or make arrangements for another facilitator to substitute
- ▶ Write plans for the sessions they facilitate
- ▶ Come prepared with supplies and materials for each session
- ▶ Welcome and include all adolescents equally
- ▶ Find ways to support all adolescents to participate equally in sessions, including talkative and quiet ones, girls and boys, those with disabilities and those from marginalized backgrounds
- ▶ Be fully attentive and engaged throughout their sessions with adolescents
- ▶ Keep attendance records
- ▶ Support adolescents to manage, use and store supplies and materials
- ▶ Provide adolescents with information about other programmes, services and support
- ▶ Follow the agreed upon reporting and referral procedures when adolescents' health, safety or wellbeing is at risk, and connect them to the appropriate support or services
- ▶ Adhere to Child Protection and Child Safeguarding policies and procedures
- ▶ Set a good example for adolescents (during or outside of sessions) through respectful and positive behaviour

### Facilitators should never:

- ▶ Be late or miss a session without contacting their supervisor and attempting to arrange a substitute
- ▶ Arrive for a session unprepared
- ▶ Use supplies or materials for adolescents for other purposes, unless by explicit agreement with the steering committee and adolescents
- ▶ Make any adolescent feel unwelcome or excluded
- ▶ Ask for or accept personal favours in exchange for their work or the materials they supply – for example, sexual contact, labour, goods and/or other services
- ▶ Beat, hit or slap or use any other form of physical punishment inside or outside sessions
- ▶ Insult, use derogatory terms, or make vulgar, discriminating or humiliating jokes or comments about adolescents, other facilitators, volunteers or staff
- ▶ Engage in romantic or sexual relationships with adolescents from their sessions
- ▶ Ignore warning signs that adolescents may face risks to their health, safety or wellbeing and require specialised support and protection
- ▶ Smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, or use drugs prior to or during sessions

## TOOL: Checklist: facilitator self-evaluation

Facilitators can use the questions below to assess their work with adolescents.  
Adapt or add questions as appropriate.

Question	No	Somewhat	Yes
I understand the Ten Key Competencies and Ten Key Approaches, and how to use the activities, tools and supplies in the Adolescent Kit.			
I am prepared for sessions and well informed about topics and activities.			
I arrive on time for my sessions.			
I keep attendance records.			
I support adolescents to manage, use and store supplies and materials.			
I can call participants by name.			
I don't favour participants I already know personally over those I don't.			
I take time to listen to the adolescents.			
I support everyone's experiences and right to their own opinions.			
I don't judge the adolescents, even if I don't share their views.			
I am aware that my cultural background shapes my values, beliefs and assumptions, just as participants' cultural backgrounds shape theirs.			
I am aware of gender roles and differences.			
I encourage all participants to share their experiences and to contribute to group learning.			
I support all adolescents to participate equally in activities and discussions.			

Question	No	Somewhat	Yes
I provide adolescents with information about other programmes, services and support that they may benefit from or enjoy.			
I know how to read and interpret adolescents' responses, verbal and nonverbal.			
I understand group dynamics and feel comfortable managing conflicts.			
I know how to stay in charge, without being overly controlling.			
I act in a professional, calm manner, even when I feel provoked.			
I am comfortable adapting sessions to meet participants' needs.			
I encourage adolescents to take on responsibilities, even if that means they perform them in a different way than I do.			
I understand that the topics addressed during sessions may have an emotional impact on adolescents.			
I am empathetic and understanding about participants' emotional reactions and know how to handle them.			
I know my limits as a facilitator and where to refer adolescents with problems I can't handle on my own.			
I can recognise warning signs that adolescents may face risks to their health, protection, safety or wellbeing.			
I know how to follow reporting and referral procedures (including confidentiality guidelines), and how to connect adolescents to appropriate support and services.			
My body language and facial expressions are respectful and friendly.			
I present one idea at a time and show relationships between ideas, summarizing when necessary.			

Question	No	Somewhat	Yes
I frequently use examples, charts, and visual/audio aids to illustrate my points.			
I use humour and imagination to keep participants interested.			
I am aware that I do not know all the answers and am open to learning from participants.			
I encourage sharing of participants' knowledge and skills and don't seek to impress learners with my own knowledge.			
I challenge participants' thinking in a supportive and affirmative way.			
I regularly encourage adolescents to review their group performance.			
I am receptive to feedback, both informally and through formal evaluation.			

## Tool: Running an adolescent feedback session

Use the tool below to help you to obtain formal feedback from adolescents regarding their facilitators.



### Running a formal feedback session

#### Consider

Adolescents' feedback can help facilitators to improve their skills, and to identify areas where facilitators may need additional support or training.

Be aware of the sensitivities involved!

- ▶ Support an open, constructive dialogue between adolescents and facilitators.
- ▶ Make sure that adolescents and facilitators understand how the feedback will be used to improve their work together.
- ▶ Make sure that facilitators value and respect adolescents' opinions.

#### Plan the basics

**Select a time and place** for a structured feedback discussion with adolescents and facilitators. This can take place during or outside sessions, in an activity space, or in another familiar setting where everyone feels safe.

**Decide on the best way for adolescents to share their feedback**, taking into account their age, maturity and emotional wellbeing. Younger adolescents (ages 10-14), those coping with difficult experiences, and newer participants may be more comfortable with a very short consultation using simple questions. Others may be ready for a longer, more reflective discussion.

#### Before

**Meet with facilitators individually or in a group to:**

- ▶ Discuss what type of feedback from adolescents would be helpful and in which areas;
- ▶ Develop a list of questions to ask adolescents; (Refer to **The Great Facilitator checklist** tool for guidance).
- ▶ Agree on how adolescents' feedback will be used;
- ▶ Clarify the consequences if facilitators receive strong or weak feedback (for example, whether they can expect additional training or support).

#### During

**Clarify the purpose of the feedback discussion.** Make sure adolescents understand how their opinions and feedback will be used.

**Review facilitators' roles** with adolescents. (The Great Facilitator checklist tool can be adapted for this purpose).

**Start with the positive.** Begin discussions by asking adolescents to outline facilitators' strengths, and to describe positive experiences from their sessions. For example, ask adolescents to:

- ▶ Identify facilitators' top three strengths, and provide examples;
- ▶ Complete the following sentences: A time our facilitator did something very helpful for me was... or I like it when my facilitator...

## During

### **Focus on opportunities, not problems.**

For example, ask adolescents to complete the following sentences:

- ▶ Something our facilitator does not know about me (or about our group) that I wish he/she knew is...
- ▶ I would like it if our facilitator would do ... (more often).

**Move on if highly sensitive issues are raised.** If one or more adolescents express a very negative opinion of a facilitator, and/or if they suggest that a facilitator has violated their Code of Conduct, don't continue the discussions with a large group present. Move on to another topic and follow up after the session with the parties concerned. Take appropriate action immediately (and confidentially), if a serious problem is suspected.

**Discuss next steps** for improving work together. For example, complete the following sentences:

Facilitators: In our next sessions I will ...

- ▶ continue to ...
- ▶ do ... more often
- ▶ start (doing) ...

Programme Coordinators: To help facilitators do their best work I will...

- ▶ continue to ...
- ▶ do ... more often
- ▶ start (doing) ...

Adolescents: To help our facilitator support us, I will ...

- ▶ continue to ...
- ▶ Do ... more often
- ▶ start (doing) ...

**Conclude with a clear agreement** about the steps that will be taken to support facilitators in their work with adolescents.

**End on a positive note.** If appropriate (based on what was discussed), take a moment to acknowledge and applaud the facilitator(s) and the adolescents. Use this as an opportunity to celebrate the group's efforts and achievements.

## After

Follow up with facilitators to make sure that they understand adolescents' feedback and to agree on how to move forward. Check in with them regularly to see whether they have implemented any agreed upon changes, and provide support where necessary.

## Tool: Great facilitator checklist

Use the questions below for guidance when asking adolescents to share feedback about their facilitators. Add or adapt any questions that make sense in your particular context.



Refer to the **Running an adolescent feedback session** tool.

### Ask adolescents:

How well do these statements describe your facilitator?

Does your facilitator always, sometimes, rarely or never do the following?

Can you think of examples of times when your facilitator did or did not do these things?

- ▶ Our facilitator is at our activity space and ready to start when our session begins.
- ▶ Our facilitator has activities planned for us.
- ▶ Our facilitator makes sure that we have the supplies or materials we need for a session.
- ▶ Our facilitator makes us feel welcome and important.
- ▶ Our facilitator talks to us in positive, encouraging and respectful ways.
- ▶ Our facilitator encourages us to participate in activities, but never forces us to.
- ▶ Our facilitator pays attention during sessions, and is available to help us if we have a question or need support.
- ▶ Our facilitator notices if we seem unhappy or have been absent, and tries to help.
- ▶ Our facilitator lets us plan sessions together and includes activities that we think are helpful and interesting.
- ▶ Our facilitator sets a positive example and behaves respectfully during and outside of our sessions.



# **TRANSITIONING OUT OF YOUR CIRCLE**



# Prepare for your intervention to transition or end

**It is important to have plans in place for ending or handing over your intervention with the Adolescent Kit. As you come to the end of your activities, take time to prepare adolescents and the community for the next steps, and to celebrate your achievements together.**

## 1. Plan your exit strategy from the start

Make sure that you include the expected duration and timeframe of your intervention with the Adolescent Kit within your initial plans (i.e. in your project document). The expected duration should take into account the humanitarian situation, programme context, and funds available for activities. As part of your planning, you should also develop a clear exit strategy that outlines options for continuing, transitioning or ending your activities with adolescents once your expected time is up.

### Set expectations

Make sure that there is clear and open communication from the start so that all stakeholders – adolescents, facilitators, steering committee members, parents and others -- are clear about the planned duration of your intervention with the Adolescent Kit.

## 2. Decide the best way to move forward

Before your intervention with the Adolescent Kit is scheduled to close, try to involve all of your stakeholders – adolescents, facilitators, steering committee member and others – in decisions about what to do as you come to the end of your activities. The best way forward will depend on many different factors, including the resources available, interest of adolescents and the community, success of your work to date and the humanitarian context.

Possible options include:

- ▶ Another programme, institution or partner organisation takes over (and funds) the intervention so that adolescents can continue their work together.
- ▶ Some or all of the adolescent groups (or circles)

continue to work independently on their activities and projects.<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ A group of caregivers, steering committee members, adolescents or other community members assumes responsibility for continuing some or all aspects of the intervention.
- ▶ The intervention closes. For example, humanitarian conditions (increased security, further displacement of communities, or the end of a conflict) may mean that adolescents in your community may be moving on elsewhere or returning to their homes. Alternatively, there may not be community support or interest in continuing your intervention with the Adolescent Kit.

Refer to **Deciding next steps** tool.

## 3. Prepare adolescents and other stakeholders for the next steps

However you decide to move forward, it is important to give adolescents and other stakeholders (particularly facilitators) as much advance warning as possible - and to prepare them for the next phase.

If the intervention will continue as part of a different entry programme or with a new partner organisation, explain to adolescents and facilitators exactly when, where and how the transition will take place – and reassure them that their needs will continue to be supported. Give them plenty of time to prepare, voice their concerns and to understand how the transition will affect them, so that there aren't any big surprises when the intervention changes hands.



If your intervention is due to close:

- ▶ Explain why, and reassure adolescents that it doesn't reflect any failure on their part – or a lack of concern for them from facilitators, volunteers or others.
- ▶ Discuss adolescents' hopes and concerns, and support them to use their skills and resources to manage the transition, and to find alternatives for continuing to work and have fun together.
- ▶ Support adolescents, facilitators and/or interested community members to take over the intervention (if they want to), and spend time preparing them

<sup>1</sup> This may work best in situations where adolescents have had time to form strong, well-organised groups.

## When interventions are due to close...

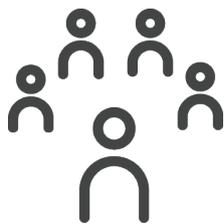
Encourage adolescents! Emphasize that their energy, motivation and commitment are the only real requirements for continuing their work together.

to run activities, manage supplies and coordinate sessions.

### 4. Reflect on your progress

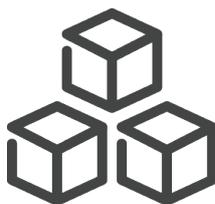
Reaching the end of your intervention with the Adolescent Kit provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your progress and to identify what has and hasn't worked. This means going back to the goals that you set for your intervention, and checking to see whether you have fulfilled them or not. It also means working with adolescents to assess whether they have reached the goals they have set for themselves regarding the competencies – knowledge, attitudes and skills – that they hoped to gain through your work together. Refer to **Measuring progress toward competency goals** tool.

Work with adolescents, stakeholders and others to carry out a final evaluation of your work together. Use their feedback to try to determine whether your intervention with the Adolescent Kit has resulted in any positive changes to participants' lives, and to shape other programmes and interventions for adolescents in the future.



### 5. Mark the occasion

Whether your intervention with the Adolescent Kit is closing, changing hands or evolving within a new form, make sure that you take time to celebrate adolescents' achievements and to mark the end of your work together. This can help to end things on a high note, and provide a sense of closure to everyone involved.



- ▶ Hold a ceremony or celebration for adolescents, facilitators and community stakeholders.

- ▶ Encourage adolescents to present their work through a final art exhibition, music performance or sports event and invite the community to participate.
- ▶ Ask adolescents how they would like to mark the occasion! They may have creative ideas for commemorating their time together.

## Monitor and adapt

Ending interventions and programmes is all part of the process. Remember that things change fast in humanitarian situations, and that you may end up closing your intervention down early, extending it for much longer than you expected or handing it over to other programmes or partner organisations to continue in a different way. The important thing is that you plan your exit strategy carefully, and involve adolescents and community stakeholders at each step along the way.

## Tool: Moving forward

See the list below for some ideas for transitioning your intervention with the Adolescent Kit.

In some cases, local institutions, NGOs, government, members of the community and adolescents themselves may be open to assuming responsibility for continuing work with the Adolescent Kit.

### The activities, tools and supplies in the Adolescent Kit can continue to support adolescents by:

- ▶ Integrating activities, tools and materials into teachers' lesson plans so that the Adolescent Circles approach becomes part of the **school curriculum** – with support from the local education department
- ▶ Transitioning the intervention into an **after-school club** or becoming an **extracurricular activity** facilitated by adolescents or volunteer teachers/community members
- ▶ Transitioning the intervention into an **adolescent/youth club** or **peer-to peer** initiative outside of school, (facilitated by adolescents or volunteer community members), for example within a youth or community centre
- ▶ Becoming part of a **community-based committee** that works on community development projects or relief efforts
- ▶ Integrating the Adolescent Circles within **arts, recreation, sports** or other adolescent/youth focused programmes, with support from other NGOs or development partners
- ▶ Becoming part of **informal education, child protection, peacebuilding or youth development initiatives** with support from other NGOs or development partners
- ▶ **Becoming a** new adolescent and/or community-led initiative that is supported by local caregivers, leaders and other community members so that adolescents can continue their work together (for example, funds could cover costs of trained facilitators)

## TOOL: Deciding next steps

As your intervention draws to a close, use the questions below to guide decisions about next steps.

- ▶ Should the intervention be continued? Has it been successful? Do adolescents and community stakeholders want it to continue?
- ▶ Do you have the resources, motivation and time to extend the intervention for additional months or years?
- ▶ Is there a suitable programme, institution or partner organization that could take over the intervention?
- ▶ Are there any community members or adolescents who would like to keep some (or all) aspects of the intervention running? What kind of support or preparation do they need?
- ▶ Should the intervention continue in the same way? For example, with the same goals, adolescents, locations, etc?
- ▶ Are there ways to improve the intervention moving forward?
- ▶ If the intervention closes, how can you prepare adolescents and the community? How will you celebrate adolescents' achievements and mark the occasion?
- ▶ How can you document and share lessons learned from your intervention?



