

There were signs...

... being undocumented and young in the UK



Welcome!

This resource has been created to raise awareness about young people living in the UK who may be undocumented (also known as having 'irregular status'). It is aimed at learners in key stage 4, aged 14-16 years, and for those that educate them. The resource is built around a short animation called '*There were signs*' that shares insights into the lives of undocumented young people in the UK.

The content of this resource may include concepts, terminology and areas of learning that are relatively new to both learners and educators. We therefore signpost to various other forms of support that you may wish to use alongside this resource in order to maximise the learning potential for your learners.

All of the ideas and activities within this resource are offered as ideas, and we fully expect that educators will select and further adapt the materials to suit their learners and personal teaching styles. The overall resource has been designed for delivery over approximately two hours meaning it could be used for a double lesson, two single lessons, or across several form/tutor sessions. It would also lend itself to forming part of an off-timetable day such as a Citizenship day.

These icons appear at the start of each activity and give a quick overview of what educators will need to complete the activity:



Time: an estimate of the time needed to complete the activity. Educators will adapt to suit their own style, so this is only offered as a guide.

Printing: there is a printed element of this resource which is provided in A4 format. You may wish to enlarge it in some instances as advised.

Online: you will need online access for the activity (i.e. access to the animation)

Powerpoint: we have provided key slides to support activities where relevant and these are clearly indicated in the notes.

In addition we have used a variety of icons to ease navigation and draw attention to specific content as necessary. These icons are briefly explained below.



Activity

A specific activity within the resource. Each is numbered and individually named for ease of reference and includes expected duration and links to any necessary materials.



Information

Used to highlight key information that may offer context for the learning or raise specific issues to consider in using the resource.



Time out

This is used to indicate points where educators and learners may need to take a 'time-out' to check their understanding about something or consider their feelings/perspectives before continuing.



Information

IMPORTANT

The legal situation of young people who are undocumented/of irregular status is very complicated and is an area of ongoing legal debate (through test cases etc.).

It is important to recognise that **this resource does not offer any legal guidance** in any form or for any purpose. It is designed to raise awareness of the issues facing undocumented young people and of the avenues of support that are open to them.

We have taken every reasonable precaution in the production of this resource to ensure that we are representing a fair and true picture of the issues it covers. The materials have been reviewed by a lawyer specialising in support for undocumented young people.

As an educator you should be cautious to avoid giving any information to young people in a way that it could be construed as being legal advice. Not only may the information be incorrect, but it may also cause undue anxiety.

This is not however a reason not to engage in the issue. **Young people have a right to know about their status** and to be aware that this may influence the choices and decisions they are able to make about their futures. The sooner young people become aware of their undocumented status the greater the options for resolving.

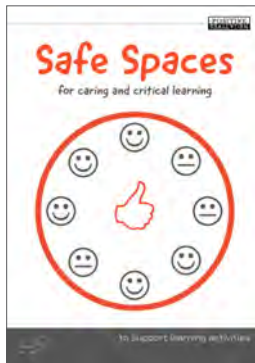
We urge that in any instance where young people may be concerned about their own status that you **refer them to the organisations detailed within the resource (and below for ease of reference)** who are able to offer specialist advice.

Kids in Need of Defense UK



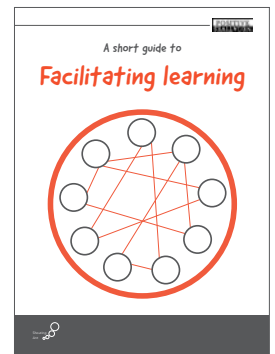
Common guidance

As the content covered by this resource could be considered controversial or sensitive, we recommend that all educators take a few minutes to read through the following common guidance documents before using any of the activities with learners. Both guides can be found on the Positive Negatives website:



Creating Safe Spaces - this short document offers suggestions for ensuring you have created a safe space within which to engage learners.

A short guide to facilitating learning - ideas and best-practice guidance for facilitating (as opposed to teaching) the learning.



Acknowledgements

This resource was written by Rosie Wilson and Rob Bowden of Lifeworlds Learning working in partnership with ShoutingAnt. It was supported by Rachel Shapcott and Emily Oliver of Positive Negatives and by Inger denHaan of the Central England Law Centre.

The resource was made possible with funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

We are grateful to Niamh McGuinness and the pupils of All Saints School in Dagenham for their engagement with and feedback on the earlier stages of this resource.

Most importantly, we would like to thank the undocumented young people and creative artists who have come together through their stories and talents to make possible the animation and comic that this resource is built around.



Activity 1: Getting set

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PPT

Overview

This activity introduces learners to the resource and to its central focus around issues of citizenship and identity. The key learning intentions are:

1. to explore what it means to turn 18 and transition (in legal terms) from being a 'child' to an 'adult';
2. to think about the rights people have at 18 and whether these are shared by all;
3. to introduce the idea of 'undocumented' young people and assess current understanding of this term.

Process

Explain to learners that they are going to be thinking about citizenship and identity through a number of short, but connected activities

1. To begin, ask learners to turn to a partner (or in a three) and share their initial thoughts about

“what does it mean to be 18?”

[NOTE: the statement is available for display on Powerpoint slide 1. You may wish to provide learners with scrap paper and ask them to note 5 ideas ready to share back from their discussion.]

2. Invite ideas back from learners and perhaps make a list of them on a whiteboard/flipchart, clarifying or safely challenging any as they are aired and before adding them to the list.

The following prompts could be used to encourage contributions if necessary:

- *Are there things you can do at 18 that you couldn't do before?*
- *Does turning 18 provide specific opportunities that are new to you?*
- *How does the idea of freedom relate to turning 18?*
- *Is everything about turning 18 positive?*
- ***How do you feel when you think about turning 18?*** *[NOTE: this last one should be explicitly drawn out if not raised by young people themselves]*

3. Pose the question to the group:

“Does everyone who turns 18 in the UK share the experiences we have just been exploring?”

[NOTE: a detailed response to this is not necessary, but learners should recognise that whilst the majority of young people turning 18 would share these experiences, some may not. Examples include those in prison (not able to vote for example), those with severe disabilities (may not be able to manage their own affairs or work for example). The undocumented young people this resource focusses on are another such group as we will explore later.]

4. If it is not raised by learners themselves, introduce the idea of young people who may be “undocumented” or have “irregular status” at this point. [NOTE: these terms are available for display on [Powerpoint slide 2](#)]

Allow a brief discussion of what these terms mean if there are learners in the room who are aware of this. If ideas are shared, then do not delve into them at this stage, but thank learners for their contributions and explain that the activities they are doing today will explore this further.

If they are not aware of the idea then reassure learners that this is ok, and that the purpose of the activities today is to learn about this together.



Time out: knowledge lines

It is beneficial to ‘take the temperature’ at this stage on what learners know (or think they know) about the situation of “undocumented” young people in the UK. This can help you to see the learning that emerges from these activities, but also to know where to focus potential further support. This is especially important if you find that there are learners who may themselves be in this position.

A quick way to take the temperature is to use a ‘knowledge line’. This works by asking a series of short questions and asking learners to place themselves on an imaginary line (from one extreme to another) based on their personal response to the question.

Knowledge lines are normally only used for questions when there is not a right or wrong answer – it is more about sharing perspectives or understanding positions/situations etc. This should be made clear to learners in order to reduce any apprehension, expectations, or peer pressure. In other words, “there is no right place to stand on the line - the entire line is right”.

5. Use a knowledge line (see above) to further assess learners’ current understanding. The knowledge line we will be using for this activity uses the extremes:

I don’t understand ... **...and...** **I do understand ...**

Make sure learners are clear on these [NOTE: if necessary use [Powerpoint slide 3](#) with the scale on and [slide 4](#) with the statements on, in order to provide a reminder.]

Use the extremes of a room to represent these two positions and ensure that there is a clear pathway between the two [this could be along a wall, or diagonally across a room for example]. A recording template (below on page 7) represents the knowledge line and allows you to note the positions that learners take. You can record learners with simple dots, crosses or the numbers in each location (as in the example below). [NOTE: if you wanted to track specific learners then you could use their initials]

Don’t				Do			
Q1	8	6	4	6	3	2	2

IMPORTANT: We will return to the knowledge line and repeat it at the end of the activities. Please make a note of the number of learners and their approximate positions on the knowledge line. If time allows you may also wish to 'interview the line' to get some additional insights into what learners know or think they know at this point.

Now read out each of the following statements and ask learners to place themselves accordingly in response to each. *[Remind them, that it is their own response you are interested in; there are no rights or wrongs; no-one is being judged; and that they can stand anywhere on the line (at the extremes or anywhere in between)].*

"You do or don't understand ...

- 1. ... what it takes to make someone a British citizen***
- 2. ... what it means to be an undocumented person living in the UK***
- 3. ... what you could do about being undocumented***
- 4. ... what might happen if you remain undocumented at the age of 18"***

A note for the educator

The creative team behind this resource would be interested to understand more about how the activities might shift the understanding of young people aged 14-16. The four questions used in the knowledge line have been designed to help you as an educator, but also offer useful insights to the wider project of supporting undocumented young people.

If you are able to share the results of your knowledge line (showing before and after positions and including any comments from the line thatb you think appropriate) then we would be very grateful.

These easiest way to share is to simply scanning the finished recording sheet and send it as a jpeg or pdf file to us at:

info@positivenegatives.org

Questions: You do or don't understand ...

1. ... what it takes to make someone a British citizen
2. ... what it means to be an undocumented person living in the UK
3. ... what you could do about being undocumented
4. ... what might happen if you remain undocumented at the age of 18

Record approximate positions of learners along line by writing number. Record **BEFORE** the activities **ABOVE** the line and record **AFTER** the activities **BELOW** the line.

Don't

Do

Q1

Q2

Q3

Q4



Activity 2: Animating the issue

30

PPT



Overview

This activity uses a short animation to introduce learners to the idea of young people who may be undocumented or of irregular status. The animation was made with the input of young people who have found themselves to be in this position. The key learning intentions are:

1. to introduce the issue of young people who may be 'undocumented';
2. to begin developing concern and compassion for those who may be in this position;
3. to reflect (empathise) on how it might feel to find yourself in this situation.

Process

1. Explain to learners that they will now watch a short animation about undocumented young people.

[NOTE: The animation is embedded in the Powerpoint on slide 5, but if that does not work then it can also be found at <https://positivenegatives.org/story/undoc/animation/>]

Watch the film through once and give learners a chance to freely react in the first instance (perhaps by discussing briefly with a partner).

2. Next pose the following questions *[available on Powerpoint slide 6]* and ask learners to consider these as they watch the animation for a second time. *[NOTE: you may wish to write these questions somewhere for them to see as they view the film for a second time.]*

- **What is the issue?**
- **Why is it an issue?**
- **Who is it an issue for?**

Elicit answers from the young people and draw attention to specific moments of the film if needed to clarify or add detail. Below are example responses.

What is the issue?

- Being undocumented.
- Not having permission to live in the UK, or having it, but being unable to prove it.

Why is it an issue?

- Emotional and social factors: want to bury head in sand; couldn't be myself; isolated; couldn't explain situation.
- Technical factors: process to become British was long/hard; feel British in sense of self and identity but not technically British; couldn't go to university.

- Both and possibly a summary: feeling like you were waiting for life to begin

Who is it an issue for?

- There are 120,000 undocumented young people in the UK (some estimates put the figure at closer 155,000).

3. After allowing learners the time to respond to the questions, close the activity by asking them

“what do we still want to know?”

Record any questions that come up and explain that the next activity might help us to answer some of these.



Activity 3: Digging down...

20



PPT

Overview

This activity digs a bit deeper into the complexity of the issue of being 'undocumented' and what this might mean for young people. The key learning intentions are:

1. to recognise that the issue of being 'undocumented' or of 'irregular status' can be very complex;
2. to learn that young people may find themselves in this position through no fault of their own;
3. to inform and raise awareness of the issue, so that young people may be empowered to help themselves or others if they are concerned about their status.

Process

1. Explain to learners that they will work in pairs or threes for this next activity to explore in more depth some of the issues from the animation.

[NOTE: this activity uses a set of scenario cards that are available to print and cut out on pages 12-14 below]

Give out one of the 12 cards to each pair/three and ask them to read and discuss the statement on the card, thinking about whether it is 'True', 'False', or 'it Depends on the situation'.

[Display these choices on the whiteboard using Powerpoint slide 7 whilst young people are discussing.]

2. Identify three locations in the room *[this could be three different tables for example]* - one for each response *[True, False, Depends]*.

When learners have agreed what they think about the scenario they were given, ask them to place their card in the appropriate group/location.

3. Invite learners to look at the other scenarios their peers were considering and where they have chosen to place them. You might like to ask if they broadly agree with their peers and the decisions made.
4. Bring learners back together and reveal the correct categorisation for each scenario by working through Powerpoint slides 8-10 that show the 'True', 'False' and 'Depends' cards in turn.

Allow for exploration of any concerns, surprises, responses etc. from the learners. Some of responses from young people may be useful to collate for later discussion.

[NOTE: although some of the responses include a little more detail, the purpose of this activity is not to give detailed information about each scenario, but to help learners understand that this issue is more complicated than it might first appear. That is why it is important to be aware of it as early as possible and to seek specialist advice]

5. Explain to learners that sorting the cards into these three categories was quite factual and the answers are determined by laws and policies.

Remind them that there is a human side to the issue and use the following prompt questions [available on *Powerpoint slide 11*] to help them consider the feelings or concerns they might have if they were undocumented and facing some of these scenarios.

- ***How would you feel in this / one of these scenario/s?***
- ***How might you be treated by a member of authority?***
- ***Would you tell your friends about your scenario? Why?***

6. Next, explain that they will engage in a real-life story about a young person who found themselves in the situation of being undocumented.

Distribute printed copies of the Ola comic [NOTE: this is episode 5 from the comic - see below] with one set per 3-4 learners [available to print from pages 15-22 below. *Powerpoint slide 12* includes an image to display during this task] and give a summary of story so far to offer context...

... Somewhere in the heart of London, quite recently, lived a teenage girl, Ola. She was doing quite well in school, working towards her dream of becoming a doctor and helping her family. Many troubles followed her because she was undocumented, like being evicted with her family, having little money, not being able to do things some of her friends could, and feeling unable to tell the truth to her friends. Then she met Sai and wondered if she could even have a boyfriend in her situation.

7. Give learners time to engage in Ola's story.

Did the group accurately predict what the feelings and concerns of those who found themselves in this situation might be?

Was there anything new or surprising that they found in Ola's story?

8. Finish this task by sharing that Ola's story is just one of the many voices of young people who find themselves in the position of being undocumented and share two more voices on *Powerpoint slides 13 and 14*.

A note for the educator

This activity makes use of episode 5 from the online comic 'Ola'. Previous and ongoing episodes can be found by following the comic link on the Positive Negatives project page at

<https://positivenegatives.org/story/undoc/>

You can also find more information about the 'Undocumented' project, the artists involved, and other Positive Negatives animations and comics.

1. Being a British Citizen automatically entitles you to access funding for university.

3. If you have one British parent and have lived in the UK all your life, you are entitled to work.

2. If you have two British parents and have lived in the UK all your life, when you reach 18 you can register to vote in elections.

4. If you have completed the whole of primary and secondary education in the UK school system, you are allowed to apply for a job after completing your A Levels.

5. If you live in the UK you can access free healthcare whether you are a child or over 18.

7. British Citizens have the right to work in the UK.

6. If you are 13 years old and you have a British father living in the UK then you are a British Citizen.

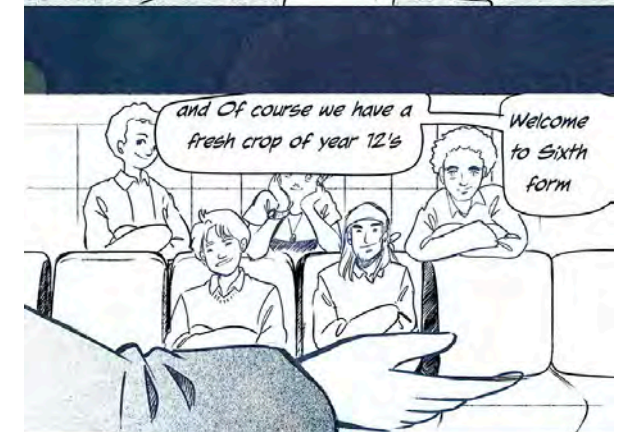
8. Even if you are a British Citizen, you have to pay around a thousand pounds for the government to register your citizenship.

9. If you apply to register as a British Citizen while you are still a child, your case may be looked at more favourably.

11. You cannot have dual nationality and be a British Citizen.

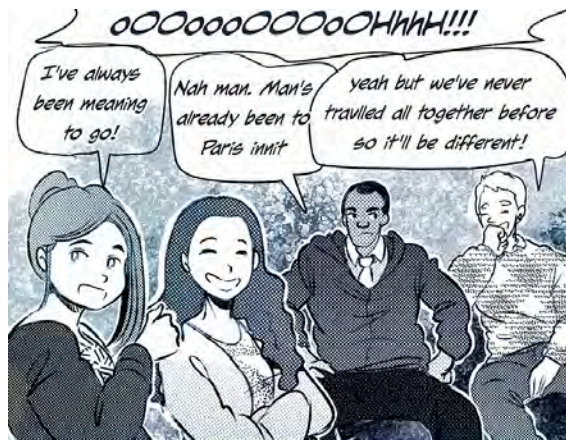
10. If you are not a British Citizen, it is hard to fully take part in British life.

12. Legal advice is available free to children applying to register as British Citizens.



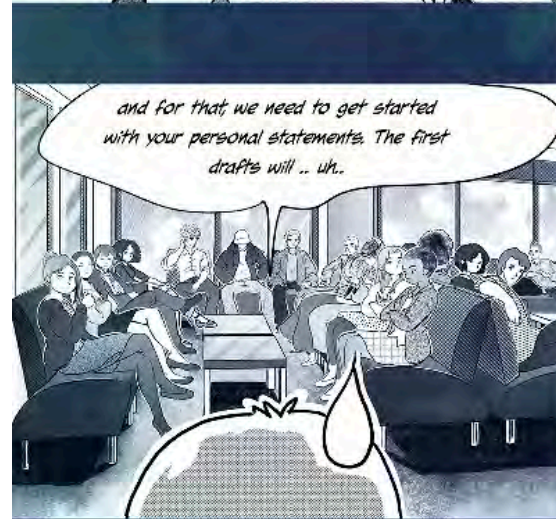


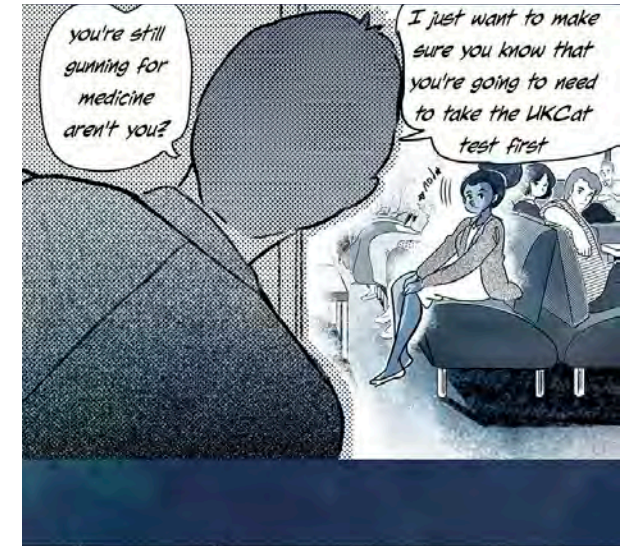


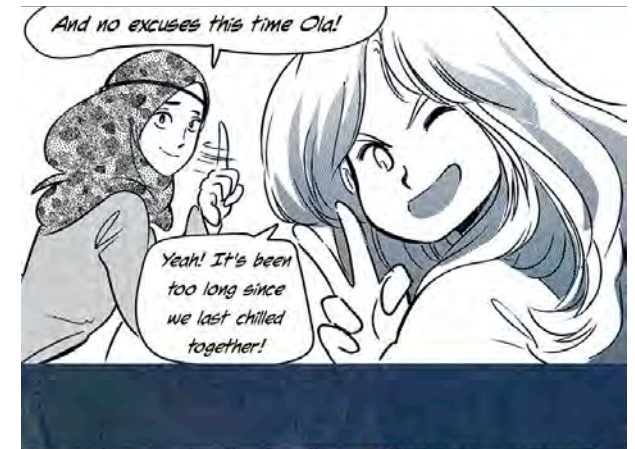
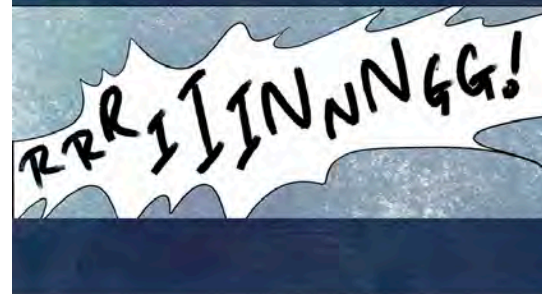
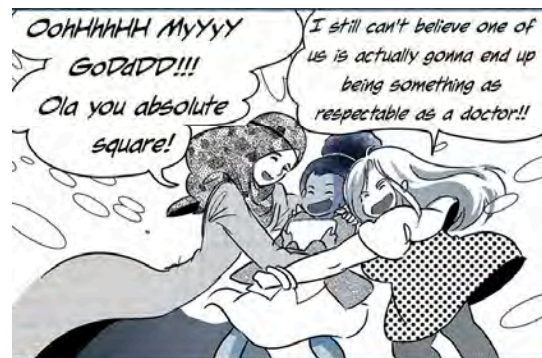
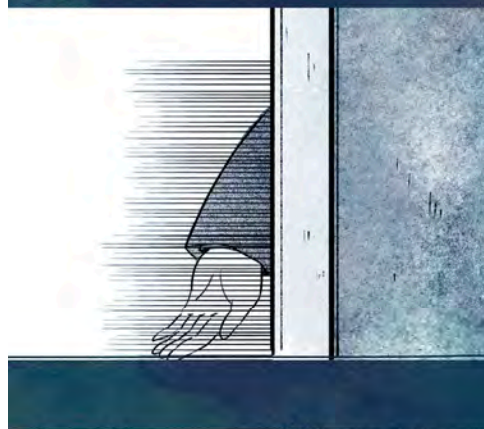




For our year 13's, the most important order of the day is to begin your university applications, and by that, of course, I mean -









Sure!

**WANT TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT HAVING IRREGULAR
STATUS, OR FIND
SUPPORT?**

VISIT

kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk

letuslearn.study



Activity 4: The power of stories

20

PPT

Overview

In this activity we engage with the medium of animation as a way to share and tell a story. Learners should understand more about the issue of being 'undocumented' and so may view the animation differently as a result - seeing more nuanced elements perhaps, or connecting more explicitly to the symbolism and artistic choices within the animation. The key learning intentions are:

1. to think about the artistic choices and symbolism used to share the story of being undocumented;
2. to consider the power of animation as a medium for raising awareness of issues;
3. to reflect on how the animation (and the learning from it) might contribute to active citizenship.

Process

1. Now that learners have had an opportunity to understand more about the situation that undocumented young people find themselves in, they may see the animation differently.

Explain that they will watch the animation one last time and that this time you would like them to reflect on it as an artistic telling of a story.

Share with them that young people who are undocumented have found the power of sharing and telling their stories to be especially helpful in coping with their situation. As they watch the film ask them to consider the following [available on [Powerpoint slide 15](#)]:

Which artistic choices in the animation do you connect with and why?

[NOTE: You might give them a list to choose from, which could include: universe, sand, bubble, beating heart (and flag)]

[available on [Powerpoint slide 16](#)]

Why might connecting with the stories of undocumented young people's lives be important?

[NOTE: If it doesn't come up you might like to prompt exploring the importance from both producer (i.e. the young people) and the audience (in this case your learners)]

Do all citizens have a duty to support each other and how might an animation such as this help?

What other measures/actions/choices could we take to support undocumented young people?

2. Explain to learners that we will consider some of ways we might offer support to undocumented young people as active citizens in the next activity.



Activity 5: Active citizenship

20



PPT

Overview

This activity explores the role/s that learners might take as active citizens in relation to undocumented young people. In particular it focusses on three related aspects: concern, compassion, and being critically informed. The key learning intentions are:

1. to reflect on how the issue of undocumented young people relates to active citizenship;
2. to learn about avenues of support available to those who may be concerned about their status;
3. to think about actions they could personally take as citizens to support undocumented young people.

Process

This activity is divided into three parts (A to C below), each relating to different ways in which learners might choose to express their active citizenship. Introduce learners to the three active citizenship areas:

- We are **concerned**
- We are **compassionate**
- We are **critically informed**

[NOTE: you may want to spend a minute or two checking in with learners and unpacking what they understand by each of these]

Explain that they will now explore each of these in a little more detail.

A) We are concerned: advice and guidance

Having understood much more about the legal complexity and emotional rollercoaster that undocumented young people may find themselves confronting, this activity considers what pathways and support options are available for undocumented young people.

1. Begin by asking learners:

Why might we be concerned for young people who are undocumented?

2. Share with learners that they have probably realised the status of being 'undocumented' is complicated and it is almost impossible for anyone who is not a specialist to give advice. This does not mean we can not show concern however.

Can they think of ways they could show concern?

3. If they do not come up with the idea themselves *[it was suggested at the end of the animation for example]*, then introduce to learners that one of the ways we can show our concern is by suggesting where young people could find specialist help and support.

Share with learners that there are specific organisations set up to support children and young people under 18 with legal advice *[these are shown on Powerpoint slide 18]*, such as Coram Children's Legal Centre and Just For Kids Law.

You might like to link to one or two of the websites briefly, or you could print and handout the information on page 26 and allow learners to follow this up in their own time or as an extension/homework task.

B) We are compassionate: I'm feeling for you, I'm here for you, I'm listening

1. Ask the young people to discuss:

Besides practical help, what other kinds of support might young people who know or discover they are undocumented need?

Elicit and record learners' responses which might include: friendship, listening, understanding, avoiding feeling stigmatised, labelled or judged; raising awareness; campaigning etc.

2. Every young person who has learned a little about this topic can show understanding for young people who find themselves undocumented.

Ask each person to think of one thing they could do as an active citizen to show compassion towards those who are undocumented. *[NOTE: they could write their ideas on sticky notes which could be collected to create a display perhaps. Some ideas are shown below.]*

- It might be that getting in touch with those in a similar situation could help.
- Showing that you understand the challenge.
- Listening to the feelings of those affected.
- Raising awareness of the issue more widely in order to challenge stigma.

C) We are critically informed: If I know then I can do...

Remind learners that the status of being undocumented is complex and can come about through a variety of scenarios. The most important thing is often to refer young people who may be concerned about their status to specialist help, but becoming informed is a vital first step, and often the first step towards positive change.

1. Show learners Powerpoint slide 19 and work through the chain with them inviting them to build the connections between each stage to understand the significance of being critically informed.

Share with learners that being informed in order to be able to inform others is therefore a key act of global citizenship. It might not feel like it (compared with recycling or organising a campaign for example), but being critically informed in order to be able to help others is just as powerful.

Undocumented young people have themselves talked of the importance of this, urging others ***'not keep your head in the sand'*** and to ***'take responsibility for your immigration status'***.

Where to find help and learn more

Coram clc Children's Legal Centre

www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Coram promotes and protects the rights of children in the UK and internationally in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Experts in all areas of children's rights, immigration, child protection, education and juvenile justice, we:

- Provide legal advice and representation,
- Research and produce evidence informing law, policy, practice and system reform.
- Build the capacity of professionals and practitioners through training and advice provision.
- Challenge laws and policies that negatively impact on children and their rights.

CCLC provides free legal information, advice and representation to children, young people, their families, carers and professionals, as well as international consultancy on child law and children's rights.

Lawstuff

www.lawstuff.org.uk

LawStuff provides free legal information to children and young people. LawStuff is run by Coram Children's Legal Centre, which provides more detailed information both over the phone and online. Please be aware that the information on this website is strictly applicable to England.

Kids in Need of Defense UK (KIND)

www.kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk

KIND helps children and young people access pro bono legal representation so that they can enjoy their entitlement to citizenship or start their journey to permanent status.

Just for kids Law

www.justforkidslaw.org

Just for kids Law work with and for children and young people to ensure their legal rights are respected and promoted, and their voices heard and valued. They provide support, advice and legal help for young people in difficulty.

Let us Learn

www.letuslearn.study

Let us Learn is a group of young migrants, who are proud to call the UK home. They aim to inspire other young people to take a lead in their schools and communities, and can offer practical support and training.



Activity 6: Checkout

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PPT

Overview

This final activity returns to the knowledge lines used in activity 1 (see pages 4-6) in order to see how learners' understanding may have developed or shifted over the course of the activities. This is an opportunity for educators to assess change, but also for learners to reflect on their own learning through this resource. The key learning intentions are:

1. to give learners a chance to reflect on their own learning;
2. to recognise how learners' understanding may have shifted or developed;
3. to identify any further need for support or follow up from these activities.

Process

1. Explain to the group that we are going to revisit the knowledge line from the beginning with the same four statements that we started with [repeated on Powerpoint slide 20 and below].

Remind them that this is not about right answers. It is not a test. They are free to position themselves wherever they feel is appropriate for them (not their peers).

"You do or don't understand ...

- 1. ... what it takes to make someone a British citizen***
- 2. ... what it means to be an undocumented person living in the UK***
- 3. ... what you could do about being undocumented***
- 4. ... what might happen if you remain undocumented at the age of 18"***

2. Record the group's new positions on the recording template and discuss any significant changes with learners

*[NOTE: It could be that students actually feel less confident with statement number 1 having learned more about the complexity, but more confident with 2-4, for example. Equally it could be that they could not move much in response to question 2, but that what they now understand is more accurate than what they perceived they understood at the initial asking. For this reason **we strongly advise** 'interviewing the line' a little to try and understand the movements (or lack of) that learners may exhibit.]*