

What can we do?

“I wish that our community and government would love us and guide us and not be ashamed of us.”

“I hope they would listen to our views and concerns.”

Street children - Philippines

There is no single ‘recipe for success’ to be followed when considering potential interventions to improve the lives of street children. However, based on organisations’ experiences, it is clear that work at an individual level with street children needs to be centred around choices. This approach can be seen as a three-stage process of:

- **Understanding choices** - to understand, from the child’s own perspective, why they have made the choices they have;
- **Expanding choices** - to help expand the choices available to them;
- **Empowering** - enabling them to actually make, and carry through, their choices, rather than making the choices for them.

There are a variety of interventions which can help children without compromising their right to choose what happens to them. Interventions can occur at any one of the following stages:

1. **Prevention:** stopping children going onto the streets in the first place, e.g. supporting at-risk families and communities to increase their incomes;
2. **Early intervention:** i.e. contacting children as soon as possible after they have arrived on the streets, before they are exposed to danger and/or habituated to street life;
3. **Protection:** for children who are already on the streets such as first aid, health care, education, shelter and counseling;
4. **Rehabilitation:** work with street children with a view to longer term solutions, e.g. education, vocational training, family reunification, life skills, independent group living amongst older children, fostering, adoption etc.

Above all it is crucial to listen to each individual child and attempt to find solutions which respond to their specific personal circumstances.

However, when considering possible interventions it is also essential to bear in mind the broad economic, social and political problems which lead to the phenomenon of street children in the first place. Priority needs to be given to addressing the over-arching causes of poverty, inequality and domestic violence. If the symptoms continue to be addressed in the short term and in isolation, then street children will continue to exist in the long term.

What can we do?

Based on the need to support both short and long term efforts to promote and protect the rights of street children there are 4 ways in which we can help:

1. Fundraise for and support street children organisations:

The best projects working with street children centre their work around choice and respect for children, as explained above. The Consortium for Street Children is a network of almost 40 NGOs which support a wide variety of street children projects around the world. You can help them by:

- a) Raising money for a particular project;
- b) Getting involved in ‘twinning’ and youth-to-youth information exchange projects and/or
- c) Working for them when students get older!

There is a full list of all CSC members and their websites at the back of this pack and more information about where they work etc. can be found on the ‘members’ page of www.streetchildren.org.uk. You are encouraged to contact these organisations directly to find out what sort of support is possible. There is also a list on the website of speakers from CSC member organisations who are available to come and give talks in schools.

Citizenship & English

What can we do?

2. Campaign:

Street children and NGOs need more than just money: they need your voices to cry out against the injustices they suffer and to call for immediate and long-term change! There are many organisations which run campaigns suitable for people of all ages.

Street children campaigns:

Some campaigns are targeted directly at helping street children. Examples include CSC's 'End Violence Against Street Children' campaign in association with the NGO EarthAction (www.streetchildren.org.uk) and Casa Alianza's letter-writing campaigns to reduce violence against street children in Central America (www.casa-alianza.org).

Other campaigns:

Many of the larger NGOs regularly run campaigns on broader aspects of poverty, education, trade justice etc. which also affect street children. Examples include 'Make Poverty History' (www.makepovertyhistory.org), the Global Campaign for Education (www.campaignforeducation.org) and the Trade Justice Campaign (www.christianaid.org.uk/campaign). See www.streetchildren.org.uk for details of a variety of relevant campaigns.

3. Spread the word:

Tell other teachers you know about this resource and encourage students to tell 5 other people about what they have learned through these activities. The more people who are aware of street children issues, the more input we can get for support and campaigning and the more we can help street children.

4. Change the world around you:

Hopefully many of the issues raised in this pack will have revealed similarities with situations of young people here in the UK, including in your own classrooms: for example, issues of substance abuse, peer pressure, bullying, violence in the home, at schools and in the community, nutrition, sexual health, the importance of respect for others and for human rights and the value of friendship. Encourage students to discuss how they can make positive changes in their own environments to help each other. Examples may include, amongst other things:

- a) Anti-litter campaigns to promote a healthy environment;
- b) Raising awareness of UK helpline numbers and anti-bullying, anti-violence and anti-drugs messages through drama, music, art, sport and creative writing / journalism activities;
- c) Peer mediation schemes to resolve playground disputes;

- d) Mentoring of younger students by older students;
- e) Peer education / homework help clubs;
- f) First aid and road safety courses;
- g) Child protection - empowerment for young people on how to protect themselves: sessions on 'good touch, bad touch', practice at saying 'no' confidently to peer pressure situations etc.

 See further information section and www.streetchildren.org.uk/voicesfromthestreets to get more information, websites and ideas for action.

What is the best kind of help?



Key learning point:

- Help can be given to street children at different stages of their journey - even before they become a street child.
- There are different kinds of organisations and projects working to help street children.
- Difficult decisions have to be made about how to spend money to support such work.



Instructions

1. Introduce the topic:

Inform students that there are many organisations around the world trying to help street children. Some of this help comes from governments, some from non-governmental organizations called NGOs.

Street children can be assisted in lots of different ways. Work can be done to:

- Stop them going onto the streets in the first place;
- Help them when they are on the streets;
- Help them get a better future.

2. Give the students the "What is the best kind of help?" worksheet to read, and ask them how they would chose to spend their money if they were the President of Kemba.

3. Once they have decided, ask them to complete the letter to the finance minister.

Extension activity

Now ask the students to imagine that they run the project that they chose. They have received money from the President of Kemba Island for their project and now need to write a press release to publicise this. It needs to explain how the money will be spent and what benefits it will bring. (This activity can follow on from 'the best kind of help activity', or can be done as a separate activity).



National Curriculum

Citizenship: 1) Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens:

- a) the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society, basic aspects of how they are financed, and the opportunities to contribute;
 - f) the work of community-based, national and international voluntary groups;
 - h) the significance of the media in society;
- 2) Developing skills of enquiry and communication:
- b) justify orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events.

English: En3. Writing: Writing to inform, explain, describe;

- e) form sentences and paragraphs that express connections between information and ideas precisely [for example, cause and effect, comparison];
- g) consider what the reader needs to know and include relevant details;
- h) present material clearly, using appropriate layout, illustrations and organization; Writing to persuade, argue, advise; i) develop logical arguments and cite evidence;
- j) use persuasive techniques and rhetorical devices.

What is the best kind of help?

Community Support Project

Many children run away from home because they are treated badly. This project tries to prevent this. Informal classes run by local people in the villages teach parents better ways of talking to and looking after their children. For example, ways that don't include hitting children and making them feel worthless. If children and their parents feel angry with each other, or if children feel like running away, they can go to speak to the specially trained village counsellor who will listen to both sides of the story and give them advice. Poverty is another reason why children leave home, so this project also helps families to earn more money by learning new skills to get them better paid jobs.

Futures

Children already on the streets lack choices about what they can do to improve their lives. This project interviews each street child to find out what their interests are and what things they are good at. It then arranges for them to learn a safe, skilled job which suits them with the help of local business people. Once their training is finished, the project loans the child some money to help them start up their own business. When the child has made some money, they pay back the loan which then goes to help another child. The trained street children can also help to train other street children in the future.

StreetSafe

Many children suffer a lot of violence on the streets. This project will do three things to protect street children. Firstly, it will develop a free telephone helpline that children can call at any time of the day or night to ask for help. Secondly, it will help to train the local police to help street children rather than beat them up. Thirdly, it will provide a night shelter where street children can stay to keep them safe at night (which is when they are most at risk of getting hurt).

subject

activity title

Congratulations! The president has agreed to give you the money you requested.

Write a press release for the local Kemba newspaper outlining how much money he has given, how you intend to spend it and what benefits it will bring to the street children on Kemba Island.

THE KEMBA ISLAND HERALD

PRESIDENT GIVES BOOST TO STREET CHILDREN CHARITIES

Student handout

Citizenship & English B9b

Design your dream organisation



Key learning point:

- Street children can be helped in different ways.
- There are different organisations working to help street children.

Instructions

Show the video to the class and ask them to write down each time they see an example of street children being helped by an organisation and write down what that organisation did to help.

Inform students that there are many organisations around the world trying to help street children. Some of this help comes from governments, some from non-governmental organisations called NGOs.

Street children can be assisted in lots of different ways. Work can be done to:

- Stop them going onto the streets in the first place;
- Help them when they are on the streets;
- Help them get a better future.

Using the Dream Organisation handout, ask students to draw or describe their dream organisation for street children.

Have the following questions written up to stimulate their thinking

- What activities / services will your organisation offer?
- Who will you offer to help to?
- What will the people who run it be like?
- Where will it be based?



National curriculum

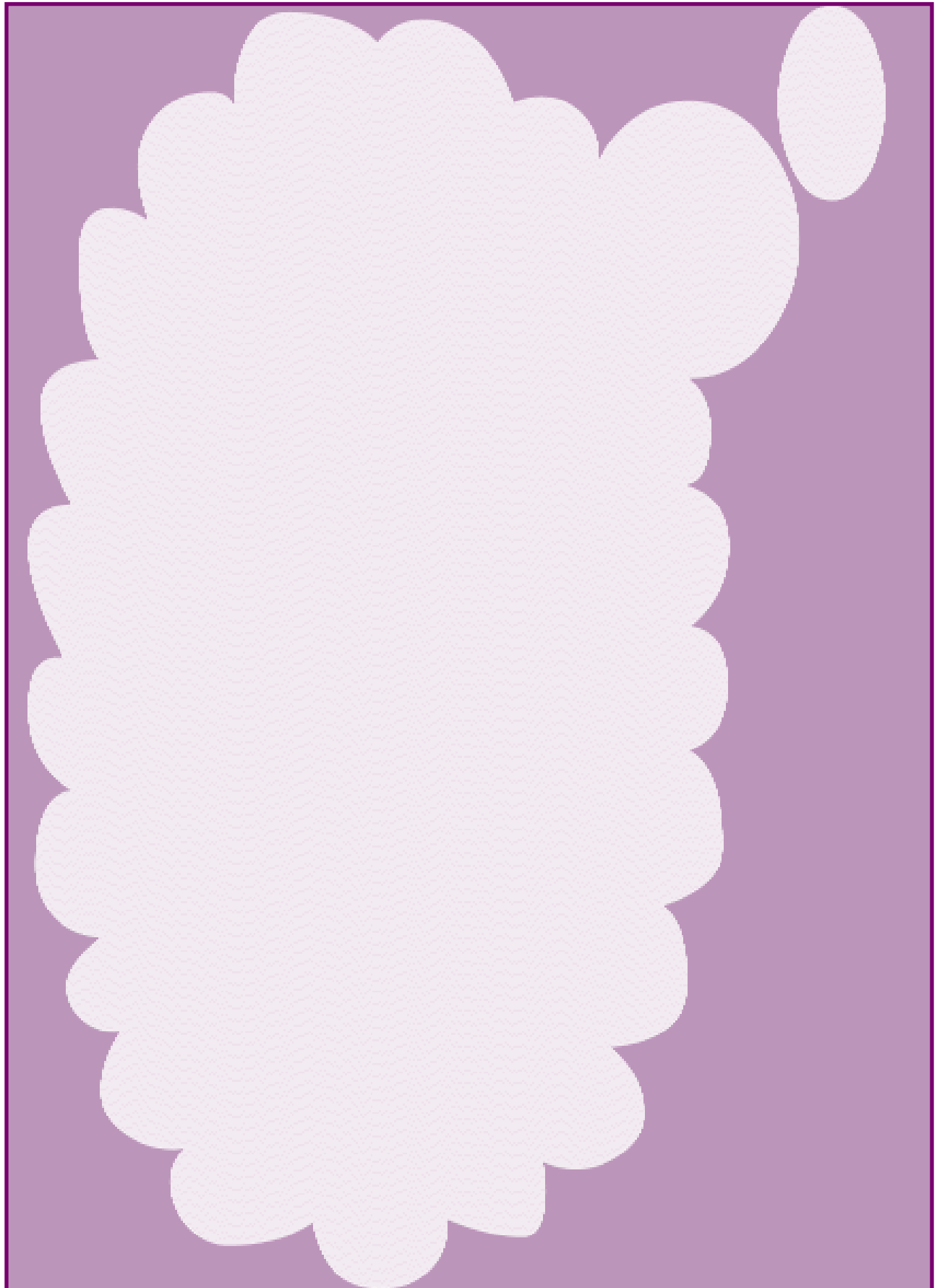
En3 Writing: Writing to imagine, explore, entertain:

- b) use imaginative vocabulary and varied linguistic and literary techniques;
- c) exploit choice of language and structure to achieve particular effects and appeal to the reader;
- d) use a range of techniques and different ways of organising and structuring material to convey ideas, themes and characters.

Citizenship: 1) Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens:

- a) the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society, basic aspects of how they are financed, and the opportunities to contribute;
- f) the work of community-based, national and international voluntary groups.

Design your dream organisation



Student handout

Citizenship B9c

Taking action!



Key learning point:

- The importance of individual action to bring about change. Everyone can do something.
- The action people can take to support the campaigns and work of organisations that help street children.

Resources

List of CSC members' websites, list of campaigns, internet.



Instructions

Classroom activities

Show students the video. At the end of the video there are two actions.

Give out the Taking Action handout.

Ask students to complete Action 1: Tell 5 other people about what you have just seen.

For Action 2 - Support the campaigns and work of organisations that help street children: provide students with a list of CSC members' websites (see list on back cover of this pack) and ask them to use the internet to find out what they could do to support the campaigns and work of these street children organisations. Alternatively provide students with information about the work and campaigns of CSC and their members.

Whole school activities

This could be something as simple as a fundraising non-uniform day or sponsored shoe-shine (this idea was started by YCare International as a way to empathise with street children while raising money) where the money goes to an organisation that supports street children. Or a week of assemblies could be dedicated to the issue: inviting in street children representatives to come and talk to the school (a list of CSC member speakers is available on the CSC website), using drama activities in this pack etc.

Or it could be something much more exciting that really supports Citizenship work. For example, each child in the school could be asked to look at the members' list of the Consortium for Street Children. They could then be asked to select the organisation they would like to support and say why. Class-based votes could then be organised. Each class would then put the case for their chosen charity at a year assembly and then the whole year votes on which ones they would like to support. The year then has its own chosen charity to support. This could build up a relationship between the member organisation and school that is truly reciprocal.



National curriculum

- 1) Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens:
 - a) the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society, basic aspects of how they are financed, and the opportunities to contribute;
 - f) the work of community-based, national and international voluntary groups.

Taking action!

Action 1

Tell 5 other people about what you have just seen



1. If you tell five people what you have just seen and then they tell four more people each and they then tell three people each – how many people might you have influenced?
2. Which 5 people would you choose to tell and why?

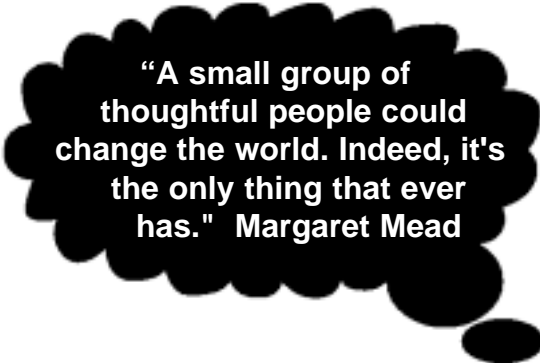
Person 1: _____ because _____

Person 2: _____ because _____

Person 3: _____ because _____

Person 4: _____ because _____

Person 5: _____ because _____



Action 2

Support the campaigns and work of organisations that help street children.

1. From the list of websites provided what action could you take to support the campaigns and work of organisations that help street children?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Which one will you do?