

Unique is
the new
normal!



FORÓIGE AGAINST BULLYING MONTH 2015

— CELEBRATING —

POSITIVE SELF IMAGE



INFORMATION BOOKLET

#fabfeb2015

F.A.B. Feb 2015: *Foróige Against Bullying through Positive Self Image*

F.A.B. Feb or Foróige Against Bullying Month, now in its third year, is an exciting annual event in the Foróige calendar. We urge you to take part in F.A.B. Feb 2015 which will be run throughout the month of February. The central theme for 2015 will be positive self image amongst young people.

Positive Self Image is about being happy in yourself and comfortable in your own skin. It is about being able to express yourself when with others and not being confined by negative pressures and put downs by others. It is the ability to accept your own limitations and flaws, and focus on the positives. It is about finding your own path in life and not following the crowd. Through all of our work in Foróige, we are helping young people to develop a positive self image. However, in February we are encouraging you to focus on how young people are developing a positive self image in your club, group or project and develop more ways they can continue to do this. **Please don't forget to let us know how you do it (send photos, videos etc to sarah.haslam@foroige.ie)!** F.A.B. Feb 2015 will also focus on cyber safety and on raising awareness of mental health and bullying.

The main elements of F.A.B. Feb 2015 are:

- Creating more opportunities for young people to develop positive self image in your club, group or project. Workshop activities created by Foróige's Reference Panel will be made available in February
- Making TAB Time more widespread throughout Foróige. TAB stands for Tea and Biscuits or Take a Break. This is a special time where young people and adults chat about everyday things and issues of interest
- Cyber Safety to include workshops and awareness about cyber safety
- Awareness raising on issues such as mental health and bullying, particularly in the context of positive self image

Check out last year's video to get you started: http://youtu.be/_cL6oSiEndo

Please make this February FAB in your group, club or project. It is not only about combating bullying but creating opportunities and the atmosphere in which young people can express themselves and develop their own uniqueness. This information pack has plenty of ideas for activities.

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What is Positive Self Image?

Positive Self Image is about valuing your own uniqueness and having the freedom to be your true self. It can be something you exude that enhances the atmosphere and quality of life around you. It is a gift to others as well as to yourself. Uniqueness comes into its own when combined with your connection to others and the contribution to something bigger than yourself. Positive relationships allow it to thrive. This integrates positive self- image and positive peer influence, the theme of F.A.B. Feb in 2014. They work together to create a powerful process of human development in Foróige. We need to continue and develop our work at creating positive environments for young people. While it is not possible to eliminate all negative influences and pressures, it is important that we enable young people to develop their inner strength and resilience, particularly in the face of these negative pressures.

Ways of Promoting Positive Self Image in your Club or Group

- TAB (Tea and Biscuits) time gives young people the opportunity to express themselves and have their views respected. Importance here of listening and respecting the uniqueness of each person.
 - Approach a different subject each week. Look at topics like, what's in the news, or topics the group want to talk about.
 - Jar Activities: Young people write topics that they want to discuss and place them into a jar without stating their name. Topics are taken out of the jar and the most popular ones are discussed by the group during TAB Time.
- Facilitate workshops to promote positive self image in the club or group.
- Play games that enhance self image- see workshop activities for some ideas.
- Hold interclub events e.g. a disco where there are intervals/breaks with activities, workshops, discussion groups etc. that promote positive self image.
- Hold a Talent Show where young people can express their creativity.
- Special evenings that have activities promoting positive self image, such as:
 - Looking natural night with no make up
 - Compliment night
 - Good Deed Night, Do Something Nice for Somebody night
 - Onesie night
 - A Be Yourself night – clothes, talents, interests
- Everyday process of the club/group:
 - Encourage more young people to take responsibility and take on jobs
 - Let everyone have a voice and participate in democratic meetings

- Put topics of interest into a box and select ones to discuss in small groups
 - Keep a club/group diary to capture all that happens
 - Have a Selfie book- with images of all members of the club.
 - Go walking /hiking/outdoor activities- encourage young people to be active and healthy
 - At the end of the year have a special event that recognises the uniqueness and contribution of each person
 - The club/group should promote values of confidence, humour, honesty , kindness, courage and being proactive in all that it does
 - Support and encouragement from leaders for young people to be themselves
 - Safety and freedom of expression as part of the club/group contract- you could use Foróige's Charter of Rights
- Everyone carries out 3 or 4 random acts of kindness during club year or on a particular night
 - Have small boxes at the end of the room – one for each young person with their name on it. Throughout the year members put a positive compliment in each person's box. There could also be a box for each person where you outline possibilities as to how they could be better.
 - Picture of person with positive comments written by others. This is done throughout the year.
 - Charity fashion show where person wears unique clothing using clothes from a charity shop.
 - Selfie day - put selfie online eg. on Instagram and other add positive thoughts.
 - 26 days of positivity on Instagram for the month of February, including photos and positive things about the person.

Ideas for Positive Self Image Workshop

The following workshop activities were developed by Foróige's national youth panel, the Reference Panel. Reference Panel members ran positive self image workshops in their own clubs and groups. Many developed their own variation on these exercises and invented new ones that would achieve the same outcome.

They learned that some exercises would not work with every group. It was important to know your group and what may or may not work with them. There were different ways to do an exercise. It was important to have options and pick ones that suit your group and achieve the outcome you want. From their experience, they recommended that if you found an exercise was not working then you could change it and use another option. The following are their activities and their ideas for variation of some of the activities.

Activity 1: The Quotes Exercise

Outcome: Young people are encouraged to explore the topic of positive self image

Method:

- Quotes, focusing on positive self image are put up on the wall around the room.
- Young people are asked to walk around the room and to read each quote to themselves.
- After a few minutes, ask young people to select a quote that most stands out for them. They should stand beside this quote. Ask them to reflect on why that quote stands out for them and what it means for them. They may share this with the person beside them.
- Bring the group back together and ask why they chose that particular quote and how they feel it links with positive self image.

Example of quotes which could be used:

"The greatest prison people live in is the fear of what other people think."

"Don't try so hard to fit in. You were born to stand out."

"If you know your own worth no one can make you feel worthless."

"It's not what you think you are that holds you back but what you think you are not."

"No one can put you down without your consent."

"It is not what you think you are that holds you back but what you think you are not."

"Talk to yourself like you talk to someone you love."

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

The Reference Panel felt that the quotes were a really good idea. It was important to get young people to select the quote that stands out for them and to state why. This was a good way to get people talking but it needed to be followed by good discussion

Ideas for variation of this activity:

- One group did the quotes exercise and got everyone discussing the quote that meant the most to them. They discussed this during TAB time and in small groups and did some other exercises. They got each person to do the same exercise at the end of the workshop and choose a quote. Many made different selections. They talked about this in the groups.
- Many had small discussion groups where young people came up with their own quotes on positive self image. They either made them up or selected them from their favourite songs or poems. These were written up on the wall and decorated using markers and paints. While they were doing this they discussed why they had chosen that particular quote and how it linked to positive self image

Activity 2: Exploring Positive Self Image

Outcome: Young people work together to explore what positive self image means to them

Method:

- Split young people into smaller groups and give each group a flipchart and coloured markers.
- Ask each group to write the words “Positive Self Image” in the middle of the flip chart.
- Now ask the groups to write down what comes to mind when they think of the words *positive self image*. What does it mean to them?
- Ask them to spend a few minutes writing what comes to mind on the flip chart page.
- When the groups are finished, ask them to sit back together and allow each group time to share what they have written and their ideas on positive self image.
- Once finished, ask the group what they have learned about positive self image? Is positive self image important? Are there things we can do in our club or group to help everyone develop positive self image. Make a list. Plan how and when you will carry out some of the ideas.

Activity 3: The Hand Exercise

Outcome: Young people receive and give positive feedback to each other.

Method:

- Each person traces the shape of their hand on a page and writes their name on it. They then pass the page to the person on their left and each person in turn writes a compliment about that individual named on the page (music could be played as this is happening).

- This continues until each person has written on every page and the page is received back by the owner.
- Once this is complete, give young people time to read the compliments on their sheet by themselves.
- After a few minutes, ask young people to share how what is written makes them feel.
- Encourage participants to bring the sheet home and keep it in a safe place. Encourage them to look at it, especially during times when they may not feel ok.

Ideas for variation of this activity:

- One group did not like sitting on chairs and writing. The facilitator got them to draw their hand with their name on it and put it on the wall. Young people then moved around and wrote compliments on it. This got everyone physically moving around.
- Another group were not interested in sitting and drawing as they thought it was very like school. The facilitator got them to put their hand in paint (washable) and to make hand prints on paper. This was more exciting and did the trick. They all got involved in writing compliments on the hand.
- Another group got each person to have a sheet of flip chart paper on their back and others wrote compliments on the sheet. Some discussed the idea of having a shirt that they could write on.
- Another facilitator took photos of each member the previous week. They then printed them and put it each photo up on a wall with a blank sheet of paper. When they were ready and had thought about it, other members wrote positive comments beside the photo.
- Each person takes a big sheet of paper and puts their name at the centre of it. They write their interests and hobbies on the sheet. They put the sheet up on a wall. Others walk around and make positive comments on the hobbies/interests.

The following recommendations for workshops on Positive Self Image were also made by the Reference Panel

- Older members facilitating or co-facilitating with adults was a great idea. It gave them a new and challenging role. It made them feel more valued and trusted. They felt young people were more likely to be influenced by their peers. Adults should support the older members and be there if they needed help.
- There should be lots of time for group discussions and integrate everything with TAB time so that young people get comfortable at expressing themselves.
- Atmosphere was important. It was important to get the atmosphere right where everyone felt comfortable and free to express themselves
- It was important to do the exercises in a relaxed informal manner and not have them too heavy.

Other activities to celebrate the Strengths of Each Person

Run a special activity or event that honours the strengths of each person and the contribution they make eg.

- Each person traces out their hand or body on a sheet that is placed on the wall. Everyone writes the positive qualities and strengths they see in that person and the contributions they make
- A special event to celebrate the achievements of the group and the contributions each person has made
- Each person writes their name on a page and passes it around the group. Other write what they see as the positive qualities of that person. Note: It is important that member know each other well and that trust is built
- Activities that honour the particular strengths and talents of young people or the group e.g photography, variety show, dance etc followed by recognition

Positive Self Image & Positive Peer Influence

Positive self image is not just about an individual in isolation. Rather, let it be something you exude that enhances the atmosphere and quality of life around you. Uniqueness comes into its own when combined with your connection to others and the contribution to something bigger than yourself. This needs positive relationships to thrive. This integrates positive self image and positive peer influence (the F.A.B. Feb 2014 theme). They work together to create a powerful process of human development in Foróige.

The following tips and activities can be used to enhance and development positive peer image in your club or group.

Positive Peer Influence Assessment Sheet:

A good idea is to use the positive peer influence assessment sheet to evaluate how well your group promotes positive peer influence. Identify your strengths and some improvements you can make

How good is positive peer influence in your group?

Mark 0-10

- 1.** There is regular time set aside for young people and adults to chat and connect with each other (see TAB time)
- 2.** There is a high trust level and everyone knows each other well
- 3.** The Charter of Rights is discussed and the group use it to decide their group contract/code of behaviour
- 4.** The group challenge negative behaviour such as bullying. They speak up for the rights of others
- 5.** There are special activities/events where each individual's personal traits and achievements are celebrated by the group
- 6.** Young people who are shy and isolated are befriended and mentored by older teenagers.
- 7.** Meetings are structured so that it is easy for everyone to participate
- 8.** Adults model good behaviours that promote positive peer pressure

What are our strengths?

What more could we do to create positive peer influence?

TAB Time: How it Works

What is TAB time?

TAB time is young people and leaders sitting down together for chat and conversation. They discuss everyday things and topics of interest. TAB stands for Tea and Biscuits or Take a Break. It is special time away from activities to talk and connect. Tea and biscuits can be a great focal point. You may be doing something like this already. It is important to emphasise it and have a relaxed setting and special time set aside for it to happen. Groups should not be too big (5-8).

Some Ways of Getting TAB Time Going

- Groups can gather naturally around tea or coffee. Sometimes you need to set up small groups of young people and adults
- Adults explain TAB time and how it works
- Set aside special space and time for TAB Time to happen. Use small groups.
- It can begin with one or two small groups (during recreation) and grow from there. Not everyone needs to be involved initially
- Conversation may happen naturally but to begin it may be necessary to ask a few open questions. Here are some examples.
How did your week go?
Anything interesting happening?
What is your view on _____, (some issue or event they are all familiar with)
Focus on a series they all watch – who do they like most/least and why
- These type of questions are only used if necessary. The conversation may start naturally without them and should be let flow freely.
- Approach a different subject each week. Look at topics like, what's in the news, or topics the group want to talk about.
- **Jar Activities:** Young people write topics that they want to discuss and place them into a jar without stating their name. Topics are taken out of the jar and the most popular ones are discussed by the group during TAB Time

More on TAB Time

Values and Ground rules TAB Time

- Each person has time and space to speak
- There is no interrupting or talking over one another
- Each person is listened to and their views considered
- Each person says honestly what they think and feel
- Discussions are based on what young people want to talk about
- Adults listen to young people, understand their viewpoint and only then offer their perspective and experience
- Everyone is encouraged, but not pressurised, to take part.
- Everyone is affirmed and treated with respect

Benefits of TAB Time

- Trust is developed between young people and with adults
- Young people become more confident at expressing themselves
- Everyone feels more connected and participates better in the club, group or project
- Young people become comfortable at discussing issues
- Good ideas for activities and discussions can emerge
- Young people experience the benefits of Foróige's philosophy directly
- With so many activities going on these days for young people they badly need time and space just to sit down and talk.

Some Tips

- Give it time. It may take time to mature and may be a bit awkward at first
- It may begin with a small group and then others may form their own groups. Keep groups small (5-8)
- As everyone gets comfortable at expressing themselves more substantial topics may arise such as exam pressure, bullying etc.
- Adults do not have to be experts. It is simply a matter of listening, discussing and when understanding where others are coming from, offering your perspective
- TAB time can lead to deeper discussions on topics or a club/group project.
- TAB time can be used to get conversations going between young people and groups of parents/ community members on issues of concern or sensitive issues eg meeting with the local politician

The Charter of Rights as a Source of Positive Peer Influence

The **Charter of Rights** is central to positive peer influence and for creating an atmosphere where young people can feel free to be themselves. If everybody is free to express these rights and respects them in others then this will generate a very positive atmosphere. It is important that young people discuss the **Charter of Rights** and decide how they will put it into practice. There is no doubt that these rights are practiced already. However it is important for everyone to think about them, discuss them and create new possibilities.



Developing Club/Group contract based on the Charter:

- Young people and adults divide into groups. They discuss each right with the following questions.
- What does this right mean to us?
- What behaviours will we practice to promote this right?
- What behaviours would interfere with it? (You may initially focus on 2-3 rights and do the rest on another night)
- Each group should come up with 3/4 behaviours. These are then organised into a group contract on which everybody agrees.

Challenging behaviour using the Charter of Rights

Sometimes negative behaviour will still occur. It is important to involve the group in standing up for the rights of others and discussing it on the basis of the Charter. Disruptive members need to be encouraged to respect the rights of others and express their individuality in positive ways. The following questions are useful in the discussion:

- What rights are being infringed here?
- What do we need to do about it?
- How can young people who are disruptive express themselves in a positive way?

Activities that Help Young People Express Rights in the Charter

Many young people may lack the confidence to express these rights fully. The club/group may need to organise special activities to help them do so. Here are some more examples.

- Fun games where everyone gets comfortable at expressing themselves and gets to know others.
- TAB Time that respects the rights in the Charter and helps everyone experience them in practice.
- Special mentoring for those who may be shy or isolated, where they experience kindness and respect.
- A wide variety of activities that reflect the different interests and talents of individuals.
- Small group discussions that make it easy for members to express themselves.
- The group assess their meeting based on how good the listening was. They mark the listening out of ten. They discuss ways they can listen better.
- Events and activities where young people get praise and recognition from leaders and from each other.
- Exercises that help everyone find out what they love doing.
- A project where everyone can make a contribution to their community and gets recognition for it.

Positive Peer Influence at Inter Club Events

- Inter club events are a great opportunity for young people to experience positive peer influence in a wider social setting. Here are a few possibilities for making this happen
- Plan inter club events so that everyone will experience a positive atmosphere and a sense of togetherness
- Make sure everyone is welcomed properly and experiences a positive atmosphere created by the hosts
- Games that give everyone an opportunity to get to know others from different clubs/groups
- Organise TAB time groups with young people and adults from different clubs/groups
- Organise activities where everyone mingles as much as possible
- The “ethos” of the event is advertised beforehand and everyone agrees and signs up to a positive code of behaviour based on the Charter of Rights
- Have posters around the walls that convey messages of positive peer influence
- Exchange of ideas on the positive activities that clubs/groups are doing
- Organise a speaker on a topic such as positive peer influence or mental health

Cyber Safety, Mental Health and Bullying

Cyber Safety

Organise workshops on cyber safety

Note: Foróige has partnered an **Intel** Company called **McAfee** with the aim of providing workshops on cyber safety for staff, volunteers and young people throughout Foróige. Please contact your local Foróige staff member for more details on how this can benefit your club or group.

Bullying Awareness Workshops

Foróige have designed a bullying awareness programme which enables staff and volunteers to explore the issues of bullying with young people. The programme has six workshops on bullying. These can be run with young people in your group/club. They are available for staff (on the staff portal) and for volunteers (through your local Foróige staff person).

Create your own projects

Develop your own creative project on issues such as **mental health, bullying** and **positive self-image** using for example: video, drama, art, discussion, workshops etc.

The Reference Panel who are the National Youth Representative Body of Foróige developed the Phrase *“Unique is the new normal”* when exploring positive self-image at their positive peer influence at their Conference last October.

They came up with the following list of songs that inspire positive self-image:

- Express Yourself
- True Colours
- Beautiful *“Words can’t bring you down”*
- Shake It Off *“Haters gonna hate!”*
- All About that Base *“Every inch of you is perfect from the bottom to the top”*
- All Of Me *“Love your curves and all your edges, all your perfect imperfections”*
- Born This Way *“Baby I was born to survive”*
- The Climb *“Sometimes you’re gonna have to lose”*
- Rude *“Why you gotta be so rude? Don’t you know I’m human too!”*
- Hakuna Matata *“It means no worries for the rest of your days...”*
- Happy *“Clap along if you know what happiness means to you”*