

Our future depends on empowering the next generation to become active citizens



Making a Difference From Home

Teacher & Parent Guidance Notes

Crazy times. Who knows what's going to happen next, how long this will last, and what the world will look like at the end of it? And if we, as adults, feel a bit helpless and out of control – how are our children feeling?

Social action – helping other people – has never been as important as now.

Not only because there are so many more people who need help, but also because being able to give that help, to feel useful and to have a purpose, is essential to good mental health.

That's why Young Citizens have produced this activity pack to encourage and support children to make a difference from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. The activities are designed to help children realise that they CAN take control of how they feel and react to the situation, and that there are lots of things they can do to help others whilst the current restrictions are in place.

How to use this activity pack

This activity pack has been designed for teachers and children aged 8 – 11 but if you're a parent or carer looking for new activities, and/or the children you are working with are younger than 8 (or older than 11!) you're still very welcome to use this pack and should adapt the activities as you see fit.

The activity pack is designed to be used flexibly as a whole or in parts. If you want to extract certain activities to give to your children then they should work as stand alone activities. If you wish to give them the entire pack to follow through in order, then that will work too.

The sequence of activities leads them through the process of planning and delivering a mini social action project, focusing on one of three areas: Caring for my friends and family, Caring for my community, or Caring for my planet. Children are encouraged to research an issue they're interested in, to plan and carry out an activity, and then to evaluate what they've done.

By the end of the pack, children should feel empowered and positive about themselves and their achievements, recognising that, however young you are, you can still make a difference to the world around you.

A note on safety

It goes without saying that COVID-19 is an ever changing situation, and government guidance is being updated all the time. By the time you're reading this, some of the suggested activities might need adapting or it may no longer be possible to carry them out – for example if new research shows that the virus is spread by the

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posting of letters, or if we're no longer able to leave our properties for a while. There's a 'check point' in the action planning stage which reminds the children of this – but you will need to add that caveat too.

Support with the curriculum

If you're a teacher thinking of the curriculum, this activity pack supports learning in a number of personal development areas including PSHE and citizenship, SMSC and character development as well as relationships education. If you want more details about this feel free to get in touch with us directly at:

makeadifferencechallenge@youngcitizens.org

Please help us help you

Young Citizens receives funding from a number of organisations who support our youth social action programmes, most notably the #iwill Pears Fund, but also from the Coop Foundation and other local community foundations and networks. As such we need to evidence the impact these programmes make. This has become much more difficult recently with the closure of schools, so we're now really relying on you to tell us what children have done with our resources and how successful they've been!

We've therefore included a few pages at the back of the activity pack which we'd really like you to share with us – notably the evaluations children complete, pictures of their activities, and any comments from the community (eg if a care home mentions in the local paper that they've been receiving pictures from local children for example).

You can share this information with us in a few ways:

By scanning the pages and emailing them to:

makeadifferencechallenge@youngcitizens.org

By tagging us in any posts you make on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using:

@YoungCitizensUK

Please also use the following hashtag so we're sure to see them:

#MakingADifferenceFromHome

And finally

If you're a teacher and you've loved this social action activity pack why not start planning for the new term once schools are back (whenever that is) by signing up your school for the **Make a Difference Challenge?**

Beginning with a four hour CPD certified online training course for teachers, this programme empowers and supports group social action in young children and helps them collectively to make a difference to their communities.

It's going to be a strange time again when schools return – potentially with a huge amount of 'healing' needed amongst children. What better way to start facilitating this process than with a group project designed to make children feel great about being involved in their communities once again?

For more details about the Make a Difference Challenge visit:

<https://www.youngcitizens.org/Pages/Category/make-a-difference-challenge>