

For Staff: Activities for Youth

More to Learn

(Note: this activity is from Youth Communication's new diversity, equity, and inclusion curriculum, *All In*)

Opening Activity—Concentric Circles: 12 minutes

Clear an open space in the room. Divide group members into two equal groups. (If you don't have two equal groups, you can join one.) Have one group form a circle facing outward. Have the other group stand and form a second circle around the first one, facing inward. Then explain to the group that the person they're facing will be their first partner.

Review the specific steps of the activity (below, in bold) with the group. You may wish to write these steps on chart paper:

- You will take turns responding to a question that I ask.
- When one person speaks, the other listens.
- When I say "switch," the speaker and the listener switch roles.
- When time is up, I will ask one circle to rotate and everyone will have a new partner.

Have partners greet each other by shaking hands and saying "hello." Ask the group the first question:

- "Why is it important to learn about people who are different from you?"

After both partners have answered the question, ask the inside circle to move one space to the right while the outside circle stands still. When new pairs form, have group members greet their new partner.

Time permitting, repeat the process using these prompts:

- "What's a group of people that you'd like to learn more about?"
- "How would you find out more about that group of people?"

Have everyone return to their seats and thank group members for sharing.

Read the Story: 20 minutes

As a group, read aloud either "Sugarcoating American History" by Andrew Ng (p. 19) or "We've Always Existed" by Adrian Mora (p. 16), taking turns. Let teens pass if they don't want to read.

Journal Jot: 8 minutes

Prepare the following prompts on flip chart paper prior to the session:

- What's something you learned about Native Americans/nonbinary people from the story we read?

- What's another group you don't know much about?
- How would you expand your knowledge about that group?

Pass out journals or notebook paper and pencils. Give group members three to five minutes to write a response to the prompts on your flip chart paper. Move around the room offering support and encouragement. When time is up, ask volunteers to share some of what they wrote.

Web of Support

Opening Activity—Freewrite & Pair Share: 8 minutes

Write the following prompt on the board or chart paper:

"How does it feel to be supported? How does it feel when you don't have that support?"

Remind group members that they don't need to worry about spelling or grammar. After people finish writing, have them share with a partner.

Read the Story: 20 minutes

As a group, read aloud "Finding My Way Back to School" by Alesha Mohamed (p. 10), taking turns. Let teens pass if they don't want to read.

Web of Support: 15 minutes

Photocopy handouts with the image on p. 31.

Pass out the handouts and explain to the group that it's important to develop sources of support the way Alesha did. As a result, the purpose of this activity will be to reflect on who and what we look to for support.

Group members will start by filling in the middle of the web with their name. Then they can start filling in the other circles on the web with who or what (e.g., music, movies, books, social media, school groups) they look to for support. After five minutes have passed, invite group members to share their "Web of Support" in pairs. Time permitting, have some group members share with the whole group. Also, be on the lookout for students who don't have too much to put in their web. This may be an indication of needing support from school, counselors, or other sources.

