

Conflict and Violence

Impact Issue Sheet - with Pax Christi

When we hear the word conflict we often think of war and violent conflicts in other parts of the world. But what about the conflicts that happen in all our lives? How do they affect young people? Is there anything we can do about them? Why do conflicts sometimes lead to violence? Is conflict really such a bad thing?

See **Activity: What is Conflict?**

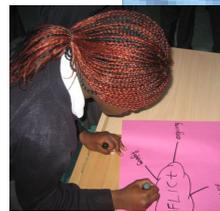
You will need: A large sheet of paper, black, red, green and blue marker pens.

Write the word conflict in the centre of the sheet.

- What words come to mind when you think about conflict?

Record them on the sheet. Spend about 5 minutes doing this. When you're done, read all the words and circle any that you think are positive in green, any that are negative in red and any that are neutral in blue.

- What do you notice? What do you think conflict means?
- Do you always think of violence when you think of conflict?
- Is conflict always a bad thing?
- Have you experienced any good things coming out of conflict?
- Can you agree on a definition of what conflict is?



Activity: Conflict Collage **You will need:** newspapers, magazines, scissors, glue.

Think about your local area. Where is there conflict in your lives and communities?

Find images and words to create a conflict collage. **Look at your collage:**

- What causes conflict? Where? When do conflicts result in violence?
- Is it always physical violence or are there other types?
- How do the types of conflict on the collage affect young people?
- How are conflicts reported in the media?
- What kinds of conflict are portrayed in soaps and reality TV shows?
- Are there any links between conflicts in your local area and conflicts in other parts of the world?



Activity: Issues Tree **You will need:** a large sheet of paper, marker pens.

Draw an outline of a tree on the sheet. Look back at the conflicts you have identified so far. Choose one of these and write it on the tree trunk. Write the causes of this conflict on the roots, the results on the branches, and possible ways of resolving the conflict on the leaves.

- How do people try to resolve conflicts?
- How do you think young people deal with conflict in their lives?

Judge *What do you think?*

- How do you feel about conflict? What do you think are the main issues?
- What's good about conflict? What's bad about conflict?

Activity: Exploring Conflict

Pin up two sheets of paper at opposite sides of the room, one saying 'agree', the other 'disagree'. Read out the statements below and ask people to move towards agree, disagree, or somewhere in between. Ask people to explain their reasons.

Conflict always leads to violence - I should always stand up for what I believe in, even if it causes conflict with others - There is more conflict in African countries than there is in Britain - Conflict can be a good thing - Young people are seen as being more violent than adults



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International Catholic Movement for Peace

www.paxchristi.org.uk www.ycwimpact.com

with thanks to the Christian Peace Education Fund



Where is the love?

'Where is the love?' is a film made by young people in East London about the arms fair that happens next to their school. You can view it at www.elaaf.org

- What shocked or surprised you?
- What does this tell you about the links between local and international conflict?
- Did any of the issues in the film also come up in your see activities?

What does the Bible say?

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not wish evil on anyone. Rejoice with those who are joyful and weep with those who weep. Live in peace with one another."

Romans 12: 14-16.

- What is this passage telling us? What does this mean for us today? How does this call us to act?
- What does it take to be peacemakers in today's world?
- 'There can be no peace without justice' – do you agree?

Info Box: *Pax Christi*



Pax Christi is the international Catholic movement for peace. It was started by a small group of Christians in France to promote reconciliation with the German people after the Second World War. They did this through prayer, visits and peace walks. In 1952 young people took part in a Pax Christi peace walk from Assisi to Rome. Inspired by this experience, they set up a Pax Christi group in London. There are 2500 Pax Christi members in the UK who work for peace through prayer, study and action.

Pax Christi means 'The Peace of Christ' in Latin
What do you think 'The Peace of Christ' means?

Act *Now look back at your SEE. What will you take action about?*

You have spent the last few sessions looking at conflict and different ways of dealing with conflict. You have looked at positive and negative aspects of conflict and at what the bible says about dealing with conflict creatively. Now its time to take action!



Help:

- Think about your friends and contacts – who is affected by conflict?
- Who is affected by conflict in your group or community? How can you help them?
- Does your school have a peer mentoring programme or anti-bullying programme that you could get involved with?
- Is there a refugee support project which you could get involved in for young people affected by violent conflict?

Tell it:

- Do you think young people need more information about how to respond to conflict creatively?
- Do you think people know how conflict affects young people? Can you think of a way of raising awareness of the issue you have chosen?

Stand up for:

- How could you stand up for someone who is suffering as a result of conflict whether that's conflict at home, school or in the local area – could you put them in touch with someone who could help?

Whatever you decide to do, make a film of your action, write a report or send some photos for the Pax Christi website
education@paxchristi.org.uk