

6 THE WALK OF LIFE

Aim

To encourage young people to reflect on the experiences of minority groups and to recognise the different ways in which discrimination occurs.

Time

20 minutes

Materials

Copies of the role cards from the activity *What About Me*.

What to do

- Mix up the role cards from the activity *What About Me* and give a role card to each participant. Ask participants to stand side-by-side at one end of the room facing in the same direction.
- Read the participants the series of statements provided below. If necessary, simplify the statements for younger age groups. Ask participants, in the roles they have been given, to take a step forward if the statement applies to them and a step backward if the statement does not apply to them. The participant who has taken the most steps forwards is the winner.
- Where did participants end up? Ask a selection of people at the front, at the back and in the middle how they feel about where they ended up and what their attitudes are to other people who are at different distances. Ask them to identify who they are. When people have identified their character ask if anyone else belonged to the same group. What choices did they make to end up where they did and why?

Discussion Questions

- In Ireland which groups are particularly affected by the issues raised in the statements?
- In real life do minority groups, such as Travellers, experience these kinds of exclusion and inclusion?
- How could we make life more equal for the different people considered in this game?
- How would the experiences of minority groups in Ireland compare to the experiences of minority groups in other countries? For example, how are members of the Roma community treated in Eastern Europe?

STATEMENTS

When I turn on the television or open the newspaper I expect to see people like me.	I find it easy to shop at my local supermarket and get exactly what I want there.
I can be sure that in school I will learn about the history of my group.	I can go to hairdressers and expect to find someone who knows how to cut and manage hair like mine.
When I hear or read about our national heritage, I am told of the contributions made by people like me.	I can go shopping on my own, pretty sure I will not be followed, harassed or made fun of.
When I go to school, I will see people like me in the schoolbooks and hear about people like me in lessons.	If I ask for the 'person in charge' in a shop I can be pretty sure that I will be dealing with a person like me.
My family can be sure of finding a suitable place to live.	If I do something stupid, wrong or illegal, people will not think that everyone from my group does things that are stupid, wrong or illegal.
My neighbours will be pleasant and friendly towards me and my family.	I am never asked to speak for the people of my group or to describe what it is like to be from my group.
If I go to a doctor I can be sure that I won't be turned away because of who I am.	Whenever I use cheques or credit cards people never look at me suspiciously.
I can go into a music shop and find music of my culture.	