

Branch Out
12 months 6 steps 1 global movement

Step Two: Blooming!

An activity that explores issues related to age diversity and its relations to people's identity.

Branch Out

Branch Out is the International Junior Branch project on the Content Area of the year of 2014 for CISV: Diversity. The project is composed by six steps that will be launched throughout the year, exploring different themes within the topic area of Diversity. Branch Out encourages participants to develop their perception towards their own identity and towards different communities.

In each step Branch Out will provide you with one ready-to-run educational activity and resources related to it.

Step Two: Blooming!

Blooming! is the Step Two of Branch Out - the International Junior Branch Project on Diversity. It explores issues related to age diversity and its relations to people's identities. It consists of one ready-to-run activity and further reading references.

Why should we discuss age diversity?

Age is a really important part of oneself's identity. It tends to determine who we are friends with, the way we dress, the way we behave, the way society sees us and how we see others. This also means that being part of an age group usually comes with specific stereotypes. Also, it is relevant to consider that different communities perceive each age group in different ways. In addition, dealing with different age groups is part of our day-to-day life in CISV – in both the organizational structure and the educational programmes. *Blooming!* stimulates participants to face these and other questions related to age diversity.

Attitudes:

- Willingness to acknowledge the differences between age groups
- Willingness to acknowledge age as a state of mind, rather than just a number

Skills:

- Ability to reflect upon the ways in which people are treated depending on their age
- Ability to think of oneself as a part of an age group while also understanding personal age identity

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of common age diversity issues
- Knowledge of age group norms and stereotypes and the ways in which they can be challenged

The activity

Requirements:

- **Materials** pens and paper
- **Time:** 90 - 120 minutes
- **Number of participants:** Unlimited

Do:

1. Introduction

The facilitator should stimulate participants to individually reflect upon the definition of each of the following age groups: CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS and SENIORS. (Taking notes individually is recommended but not mandatory).

2. Age Groups

The facilitator should place four large papers in the room - each of them should contain one of the following words: CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS, and SENIORS (some blank space should be left on each paper). Then, the participants should walk around the room and write answers/comments for the following statements on each paper:

These are only suggestions. Feel free to add/remove statements.

- What challenges a person of this age group faces
- What benefits a person of this age group enjoys
- Rank the level of independence seen by this group (1 being no independence at all, 4 being highly independent)
- Rank how fun it is to be a member of this age group (1 being “it’s not fun,” 4 being “it’s extremely fun”)
- Rank the ability of members of this age group to influence others (1 being unable to influence others, 4 being highly capable of influencing others)
- Rank the amount of respect a member of this age group receives from others(1 being no respect, 4 being high amounts of respect)

3. Age Roles

The facilitator is now going to read statements and quotes and participants are asked to walk to one of the papers which they find the quote or statement fits best (CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS and SENIORS). Participants have to select only one of the options and are not allowed to stand in between two alternatives.



Statements

These are examples. You can use as many as you'd like, or make up your own. (Facilitators should write observations on papers for the discussion later, and participants should be told to remember where they walked).

- When I speak, people listen to me.
- I can change the world.
- I want to change the world.
- I can be myself.
- I am responsible for my actions.
- I am happy.
- I am confident.
- I am carefree.
- I am comfortable being alone.
- There are high expectations of me.
- I value family above all else.
- I am open minded.
- I am a driving force in CISV.
- I am qualified to make decisions that affect others.
- People come to me for advice.
- I feel misunderstood.
- ...

Reflect:

Participants should sit down in small groups (around 5 people in each) and discuss the following:

- Individually summarize for the rest of the group what you wrote on the papers for each age group. (Facilitators can remind participants of the various questions that were on the papers). Please also specify what you believed to be the numerical age range of each group. How was this different from what others thought the age range should be?
- In the second part of the activity, what did you base your decisions off of when you had to make a decision between age groups?
- Did you often find yourself caught between two groups? Which ones and why?
- What did you find most difficult in this activity?

Generalize and Apply:

- What role does age play in your own daily life?
- What are some challenges you have faced as a member of your specific age group?
- In what ways are the barriers between each group defined? In what ways are the lines blurry?
- How does someone move from one age group to another? Is it the same for everyone? (Optional: What happens when a person cannot overcome the challenges of their age group before moving to another one?)



Alternative questions:

- How do you interact with other age groups? How does your behavior change when socializing with someone of a different age group?
 - (For adults) What is it like to be active in an organization that can sometimes seem geared only toward youth?
 - How do we witness the issue of age diversity in Junior Branch?
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Tips for facilitators

Talking about sexuality in your JB may evoke quite a strong emotional response amongst participants. So as a facilitator you should try to prepare yourself and think about emotionally intelligent ways to work with participants' (and your own) feelings.

Some things you can do to prepare yourself:

- Together with one or two people who you trust, draw up a list of reactions that you think may come from participants.
- Analyse what emotions and values underlie these anticipated responses to topics such as homosexuality.
- Talk about and clarify your own opinions, values and emotions about these topics.
- Do some research and read up about those issues that you feel uncertain about and anticipated “hot topics”.
- Look at the goals and indicators of the step #1 activity and discuss how you can use your own (facilitator) and trainees’ emotions to reach these goals

Adapt the activity to your needs

Feel free to make changes in the activity and to adapt it to the needs and specificities of your group!

Take pictures and share them with us

Branch Out is a global project. Let us know whenever you apply Branch Out in your chapter. Take pictures and share them with us through **branchout@ijb.cisv.org!**

Pictures will be posted in our facebook page, **facebook.com/branchout2014** and our tumblr, **branchout2014.tumblr.com**

Introducing Branch Out

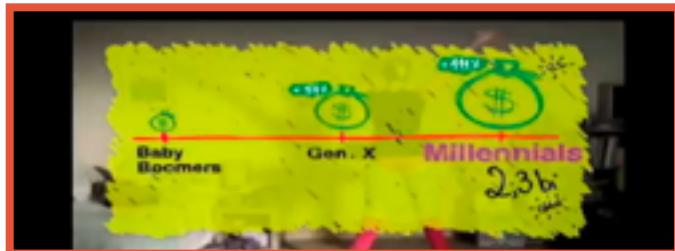
After the activity is over, remember to present Branch Out to the participants, so they can understand the educational purpose of the project, as well as to create interest on the next steps.



Feedback

Get feedback from your participants and share your impressions with the Branch Out team! Send an e-mail to branchout@ijb.cisv.org

Further Reading



→ An elucidative video on the differences between generations and the potentials of the current youths

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seCHVI-VThmw>

Culture > Books > Penelope Lively

Penelope Lively: 'So this is old age'

When we are young we can never imagine getting old, and yet so many of us are now living longer. Amid all the aches and pains and indignities, there are surprising consolations, reflects Penelope Lively

→ An article with reflections on the process of getting older

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/05/penelope-lively-old-age?INTCMP=SR-CH>

Malala Reminds Us That Leadership Comes In All Shapes And Sizes

Comment Now | Future Comments

Editor's Note: Aljazeera Nelson is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Vital Voices Global Partnership, which helped incubate the Malala Fund, the official organization led by Malala Yousafzai helping girls go to school and raise their voices for the right to education.



→ Read about Malala Yousafzai, a 16 y.o Pakistani girl who leads an organization helping the girls of her generation.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/skollworldforum/2013/10/11/malala-reminds-us-that-leadership-comes-in-all-shapes-and-sizes/>

TIME | Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation

Monday, May 20, 2013
By Joel Stein

Correction Appended: May 9, 2013

I am about to do what old people have done throughout history: call those younger than me lazy, entitled, selfish and shallow. But I have studied! I have statistics! I have quotes from respected academics! Unlike my parents, my grandparents and my great-grandparents, I have proof!

→ A challenging article about today's youth and its profile in relation to older generations' profiles.

http://www.fandm.edu/uploads/media_items/stein-2013-me-generation.original.pdf