

Activity 1 **How do you describe yourself?**

🕒 Approx 20 min

✍️ Flipchart paper and markers

Think about how you identify yourself?

Think of situations where you might identify yourself:

- **By ethnicity?** (for example - I am a Traveller)
- **By age?** (for example - I am fifteen)
- **By family background?** (for example - I live with my father and have three brothers)
- **By disability status** (for example - I have a disability)
- **By sexuality?** (for example - I am heterosexual)
- **By relationship to others?** (for example - I am a friend/granddaughter/pupil)
- **By skin colour?** (for example - I am a Black person)
- **By religion?** (for example - I am a Catholic)
- **By gender?** (for example - I am a woman)
- **By nationality?** (for example - I am Irish)

Activity 2 **Group identity**

🕒 Approx 20 min

✍️ Flipchart paper and markers

Please explore the following concepts relating to a person's social identity - their meaning to individual members, how important they are to a person's identity - in group discussion. The group can be split into a number of small groups depending on the numbers:

- Family
- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Skin colour
- Nationality
- Transsexual

Think about how naming different aspects of various social groups may influence how a person is perceived by others?

Discuss with your group whether it is possible to 'know' enough about a person based on one, two or more aspects of their identity?

PLEASE NOTE: You can carry out this exercise without asking for personal information from the participants. Participants may choose to 'invent' their social identities.

Activity 3 **I am... Who are you?**

🕒 Approx 20 min ✎ Photocopies of identity sheet, pens, markers

YOU and YOUR FRIENDS

Who are your best friends?

Why did you choose them?

If your best friend had a disability or was of a different age, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation or a member of the Traveller community, would you still have chosen him/her as your best friend?

Write down why having a disability or being of a different age, skin colour, religion, gender or sexual orientation or being a member of the Traveller community makes a difference or does not make a difference to you when choosing your friends:

We all have identities that are significant to us; identities that have an impact on what we think and do. This is true at school, at home and at work.

Choose ONE part of your social identity (e.g. my age, my gender, my disability, my religion, my sexual orientation, my ethnicity) you associate with yourself, and explain why it is important to you.

Part of your identity:

Why is it important to you?

How does your behaviour at home or at school reflect this aspect of your identity?

Now think about an important part of a friend's identity.
Does this reflect their behaviour at school or at home?

At times, certain parts of our social identities may seem unimportant to us. This allows us to overlook them in others. The flip side of this is that certain parts of our social identities may be significant to us and we may wrongly assume that they are equally significant to other people. Take Tom for example. Tom is heterosexual. He never thinks about his sexual orientation and assumes nobody else thinks about his/her sexual orientation either. He has a friend, Sylvia, who is Black. Tom thinks that Sylvia considers her skin colour to be the most important aspect of her identity.

a) Think about and decide if there is one aspect of your social identity which people assume is important or not important to you.

b) Choose a person whom you know through the media and discuss an aspect of his/her social identity that you think may be important to him/her.

When we feel that some aspect of our social identity is being challenged or diminished, for example, when we hear an insulting remark about a social group we belong to, we tend to identify with that aspect more strongly than usual. For example, your religion may not really play a noticeable part in your everyday life but should you hear someone talking about 'all Protestants are' you feel the need to dispute such generalisations because they simply are not true, may be offensive in tone and even cause hurt.

Describe a time when this happened to you.

Discuss how you dealt with the situation.

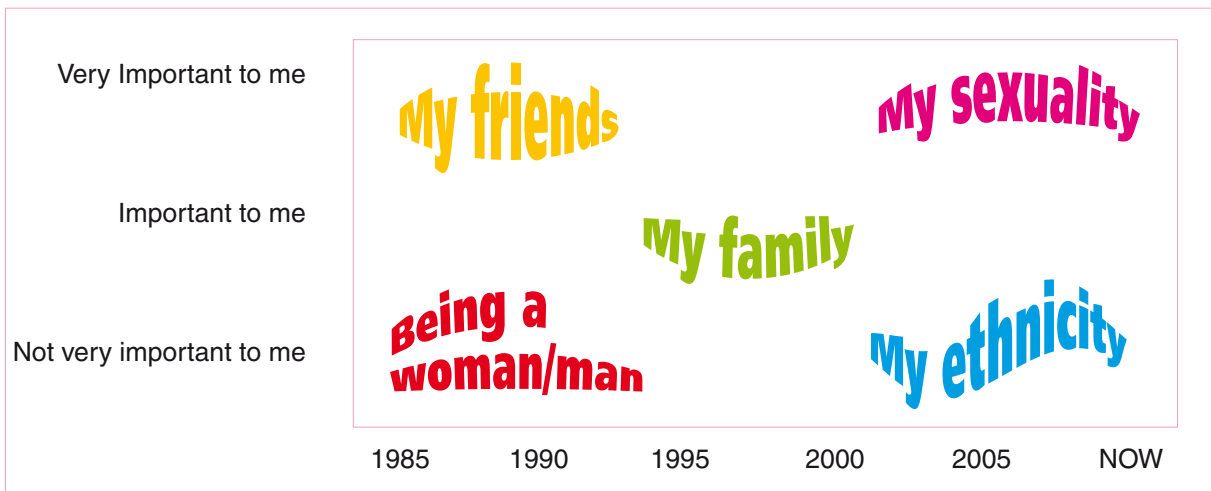
<p>Would you have handled the situation differently?</p>	
<p>Why do you think that we tend to react when our identity is diminished? For example, why does it matter if someone only sees you as a 'young person' or as 'only a girl'?</p>	

Activity 4 **How do you identify your social identity?**

🕒 Approx 30 min 🖍 Colour markers, flipchart paper, paints, glitter, glue

Draw a life-map with all of the aspects of your social identity represented. The bottom axis can be used as a timeline with the vertical axis representing how important that aspect of your identity is to you.

Fig 1.0 Life Map Example



EXTRA **Identity exhibition**

🕒 Allow plenty of time ✍️ Be creative!

Create an exhibition that celebrates your club's member identities. The idea is to explore the aspects of your social and personal identity that you wish to display and how you could do it by means of art. You will need to think about what symbols, images, etc represent aspects of personal and social identities and be able to explain why.

The exhibition could focus on an individual's identity or a combination of two or three individuals. Alternatively, your club could collectively make one large exhibition celebrating the diversity of your club's identities.

Feel free to combine images, symbols, words, colours, materials, texture, sound, etc to express your social and personal identity and to explore how similar/different your chosen concepts are to those of your friends.

Be creative and use pictures and words cut out from print media that represent aspects of your personal and/or social identity; various art materials; textures and colours; etc to design a collage or a sculpture. Alternatively, you could use video or sound, installations or performances to explore and express the identities of your club members. Use your imagination.