

10. COMPASITO Reporter

With their cameras, the COMPASITOS defend human rights!



Themes	Environment, Health and welfare, Participation
Level of complexity	Level 2
Age	10-13 years
Duration	90-120 minutes
Group size	8-24 children
Type of activity	Photo reportage or other forms of reporting
Overview	Children report on human rights conditions in their community
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop awareness of human rights in everyday life • To understand how rights can be both violated and defended • To develop collaborative skills for active participation to defend rights and to end violations
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a few community situations relating to health, safety and the environment (e.g. bathrooms, restaurants, recycling provisions). • Underline relevant articles in the child-friendly version of UDHR and CRC and make copies for each child. • Make copies of maps of the community. • Since this activity involves a critical look at some local institutions, inform in advance relevant officials. • Try to arrange a meeting with relevant local officials to whom the children can present their results and proposals, and discuss possible changes.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of child-friendly UDHR and CRC for each team, and/or large copies on a flipchart • One digital or Polaroid-type camera for each group • Note pads and pens to take notes and identify pictures • Copies of maps of the community • Optional: Printer for printing digital photographs

Instructions

1. Discuss with children what reporters do, both in print media and TV. Explain that they themselves are going to become photo reporters and take pictures of how the rights to health, safety and a good environment are experienced in their community. They may find examples where these rights are respected and enjoyed or, on the contrary, where they are violated.
2. Review these rights with children. Give them child-friendly copies of the UDHR and CRC with the relevant articles marked. You might also copy child-friendly versions UDHR Article 25 and CRC Article 3.3, Article 24 and Article 27 on chart paper and discuss their meaning with the children. Explain that these are the rights that they are going to report on, and give some examples of where they might be observed in the community (e.g. fire safety at school, healthy conditions where food is grown, sold, or prepared, clean air, water and environment). Ask the children to discuss how these rights can be observed in the community and ask them to provide other examples.
3. Divide the children into groups of three or four. Give each group a camera and a specific assignment. For example:
 - a. Group A might check safety conditions at school and other public places. (e.g. Where are fire extinguishers? Are they in working order? Are emergency doors easily accessible? Do children



- know what to do in case of emergency?)
- b. Group B might check safety in relation to traffic. (e.g. Are there safe pavements? Safe places to cross streets? Are the streets and pavements in good repair? Are there controls on drivers' speed? Are there street lights at night?)
 - c. Group C might verify eating conditions. (e.g. hygienic conditions of markets and restaurants, information on food menu, nutrition qualities of food and drinks, safety checks on water supply?)
 - d. Group D could concentrate on environmental issues. (Are there ways of knowing the quality of the air? Are there green places nearby? Are streets and public places clear? Is rubbish collected regularly? Are bins provided for recycling plastics, paper, glass, etc?)
4. Give the groups time to discuss their topic and plan how they will look for evidence. Make sure they know whom to contact to be able to enter certain areas (e.g. caretaker for school or park). They should all know how to use the camera. Each group should also have at least one child who will take notes and write up captions to identify the photographs, one to relate the photo to specific human rights and another who will write up their suggestions for responses.
 5. Ask each group to report on their plans to the whole group. Set a specific deadline for completing their reporting assignments.
 6. After groups have taken their photos, give them time to prepare a mini exhibition. Every exhibition should include:
 - a. A title
 - b. The names of the children in the group
 - c. Captions for each picture, stating when and where it was taken and what it shows
 - d. Comments on what human right(s) is / are being promoted or violated
 - e. Recommendations for addressing the violations observed and commendations for good examples.
 7. Invite parents and members of the community to view the exhibition.
 8. Try to invite representatives of the local community (e.g. the mayor, school principal, town council members, local associations) to view the exhibition, meet the children to hear their concerns, listen to their proposals, and discuss possible changes.

Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Debrief the activity by asking questions such as these:
 - a. How did you like being a reporter?
 - b. Was it difficult to find the examples you needed?
 - c. Was it difficult to 'catch' the situation in a photograph?
 - d. Was it difficult to write the captions?
 - e. Was it difficult to make commendations? Recommendations?
 - f. Did you learn anything about your community? About yourself? Did you see anything in a new way?
 - g. Can a camera be a useful tool to reveal situations? Can writing be useful?
 - h. Can you think of other tools that could reveal these situations?
 - i. What, if anything, does a picture add to something that is written?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as:
 - a. What did you learn about human rights in your community?
 - b. What were some positive examples where human rights were being protected and enjoyed?



- c. What were some negative examples where human rights were being violated?
- d. Can we make concrete suggestions for improving human rights? To whom (e.g. school administration, parents, mayor, local council, media, teacher)?
- e. The CRC guarantees children the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. Do you use this right? If yes, how? How could you use it most effectively? What skills do you need to do that?

Suggestions for follow-up

- The activity 'PUTTING RIGHTS ON THE MAP', p. 138, also surveys how rights are realized in the community.

Ideas for action

- Ask the children to choose at least one situation they want to try to improve. Discuss the reasons for this choice and possible ways to address the problem.
- The display of this work to the whole school and neighbourhood would also be an interesting and important activity in itself. Try to arrange to display the exhibition in a public place (e.g. post office, town hall, school, youth centre) and invite the public to attend.
- Write letters congratulating institutions that are doing an especially good job protecting health and safety and/or expressing disappointment for failing to maintain these standards.
- If you have not done so already, invite local community representatives to meet and discuss these issues with the children. Aim for the cooperation of the children with others to create change.

Tips for the facilitator

- This activity can easily be adapted to report on other human rights themes (e.g. violence, gender equity, disabled or minority children, information, play and leisure).
- If children are reporting on schools or other institutions, try to obtain the approval and/or collaboration of those in charge. Their participation with the children is important in creating change.
- Emphasize that this reporting is not just to find violations but also to evaluate what is going well. Stress the importance of recognizing and commending those who are protecting and providing good health, safety and environmental standards.
- You may need to give children basic instruction on operating a camera and tips on how to take good photographs. Be sure that all children learn how to use the camera and have an opportunity to use it.

Variations:

- Get the children to take pictures they associate with particular feelings (e.g. where you are afraid, where it is mysterious, where you feel relaxed, happy, uncomfortable, etc).
- If camera technology is not available, children can describe the things they see in words and drawings or tape recordings.

