

Anti-Racism Toolkit

Activity Set

Educational Activities for Use in
Workshops and Classrooms

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Anti-Racism Education and Improving Intergroup Harmony in Schools

With funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism Program the First Nations Education Steering Committee has produced the Anti-Racism Toolkit. A review of the research in determining what pedagogical strategies work best in enhancing intergroup harmony identified a number of school and classroom interventions that have been shown to be effective in reducing prejudice and preventing stereotyping and discrimination. The activities in this toolkit parallel these educational strategies.

Unlearning prejudice, eradicating discrimination and enhancing intergroup harmony has been the focus of work for many educators and researchers. From this work has risen a body of research that to a great extent tells us much about what works and what does not work in the context of schools when it comes to improving intergroup relations. The concept of improving intergroup harmony may refer to programs that are designed to reduce the frequency and prevent behaviors that are discriminatory in nature, as in racist name-calling, shunning or bullying. Intergroup harmony may also invoke notions of greater frequency of and more positive interactions with people who are different. This objective is often referred to as improving cross-cultural relations. Much of the research in enhancing intergroup harmony is designed to have a positive impact in enhancing one's attitude and perception towards people who are different, thus reducing the tendency to stereotype and discriminate. The following in-school interventions have been shown to have a significant impact in bringing about positive attitudes and behaviors supporting intergroup harmony.

It is important to note that for any in-school intervention to be effective the teacher's role as instructor, role model and facilitator is essential. As with any tool, its effectiveness is dependent upon the skills and commitment of the practitioner.

Co-operative Learning

Integration and the acceptance of differences do not naturally occur from the simple task of placing students of diverse backgrounds together in small working groups. Without any theoretical or pedagogical basis to work from, many co-operative activities begin by arbitrarily assigning students of different backgrounds into groups and having them work together on an ill-defined task. The activity too often ends with students experiencing frustration and failure resulting in fingers of blame being pointed at various

group members. It is not surprising that negative perceptions and stereotypes of others will be reinforced.

What is supported by research as a major contributor to enhancing intergroup harmony is the correct use of cooperative learning techniques. Crafted effectively, true cooperative learning begins with tasks that are designed for group success. The class is broken into heterogeneous groups and given projects that require group cooperation and interdependence based on the expertise of individual members. Students learn through the process that they require each other in order to succeed and this breeds the need for mutual reliance and individual accountability. These structured activities are powerful interventions that research has shown time again to be very effective tools in developing intergroup harmony.

Dramatized Impact of Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination

Countless films and videos have been produced with the explicit objective of reducing prejudice, preventing discrimination and enhancing intergroup relations. Media productions that provide information about a particular group, to educate about the group's cultural practices, traditions and customs, result in gained knowledge about the highlighted culture. As a means to change attitudes or behaviors, such interventions have little impact. Vehicles that represent "message" type films and videos are often recognized by students as propaganda and as such ignored or in some cases ridiculed. At best such measures are greeted with indifference but in some extreme cases they may in fact provide greater education on how to discriminate or teach new ways to stereotype. It is hypothesized that these negative responses may be the result of media used in an unprepared environment, with unclear learning objectives and little facilitation and debriefing.

On the other hand, videos and films that are realistic and present authentic characters can be effective tools. Students are drawn to characters who experience real feelings about the impact of intolerance. "Heroic" characters represent role models whose positive attitudes or behavioral changes can be emulated by students. These tools should be used with the intent to have students identify and empathize with such characters and facilitated discussions and debriefings can reinforce the negative effects of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. In many instances the most effective media tools are those that were not explicitly designed to "teach about prejudice and discrimination".

Use of Positive Role Models in School Curriculum

Stereotypes though illogical are easily learned. We learn stereotypes through our observations of human behavior and through our interactions with others. These experiences lead us to draw generalizations about groups of people, and in some cases develop into overgeneralizations and stereotypes. Our stereotypes are further reinforced in the electronic and print media. As it occurs when one buys a red car, every red car stands out and is magnified in number, once stereotypes have rooted themselves in one's mind, we tend to observe especially those incidents that reaffirm our faulty perceptions. For many young people their experiences with people of diverse backgrounds can be very limited and again may be highly influenced by the media. Too often we know First Nations people as artists, Black Canadians as athletes, Muslims as terrorists and others by their limiting and negative stereotypes. These perceptions cross into arenas beyond race and ethnicity, as there are a variety of stereotypes built around gender, disability, class, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

In-school use of materials and resources that portray groups in a positive way that contradict common stereotypes and perceptions have been shown to change attitudes about others. When using media, print or human resources, the careful selection of such resources keeping in mind the impact of positive role modeling will pay dividends in reducing prejudice and preventing stereotyping and discrimination. Anti-stereotyping is an effective way of debunking and challenging the ways in which we see others and their place in our communities. Use of positive role models will also help in developing high esteem of students of diverse backgrounds.

Inside-Outside Study of Culture

It is important to understand that culture encompasses concepts beyond notions of ethnicity. There is a culture of deafness, of gender, of class. Culture is both learned and innate, there are rules and expectations that are written and unwritten, there exist belief systems that change over time. Culture is a broad complex concept and it is dynamic.

One reason to why the study of other cultures does not result in increased intergroup harmony is that a prerequisite to understanding the workings of other cultures requires an understanding of one's own culture. Gaining an appreciation and acceptance of other cultures comes about when you are familiar with the customs, traditions, values and beliefs of your own culture. Teachers should start by having students learn about their own cultures and they then become the "experts". When teaching about diverse cultures

introduce other cultures by looking first at the similarities and then the differences between cultures.

Role Playing and Simulation Activities

The process of role playing and simulation games provides opportunities for students to learn through vicarious experience. Simulation and role-play activities can reduce prejudicial attitudes but one must be cautious about the adverse impact such exercises may have on certain individuals. The “Blue Eyes – Brown eyes Simulation” developed by Jane Elliot was found to have great personal impact on some individuals and for others was found to be extremely stressful due to the arbitrary behaviors of discrimination and unfairness directed at people. The effectiveness of these interventions though powerful on an affective level, must be implemented with care. Follow-up and debriefing in the form of facilitated discussions and didactic instruction must be included as an integral part of the simulation.

Didactic Instruction

There exists apprehension among some educators to directly teach about certain topics that relate to intergroup harmony. The teaching about other cultures while commonly done has little impact in enhancing intergroup harmony. There seems to be a reluctance to directly teach about topics such as prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination due to the common belief that it will only educate people to have more prejudice, learn new stereotypes and discriminate more frequently. On the contrary, didactic instruction which includes organized discussions about historical and current examples of discrimination, the causes of prejudice, the inconsistencies of stereotypes and the process to remedy discrimination, have been shown to be a powerful tool in building intergroup harmony. Didactic instruction when it is brief and superficial has little or no effect, but when it is long term and systematically built into the curriculum it is proven to be an effective in-school intervention.

Critical Thinking Skills

We often think of prejudice and stereotyping as emanating from feelings of low esteem, bigotry and a sense of superiority. In trying to eradicate prejudice and prevent stereotypes we often resort to propaganda. It may be presented in the form of a “message” media as in a television advertisement, or dramatic exhortation from a guest speaker. On their own with little support or follow-up they have little impact.

Prejudice and stereotyping in many instances are the result of illogical thinking. Teaching critical thinking skills, as in learning to have intellectual curiosity, being objective, having an open mind, following a systematic and logical line of reasoning enables a student to become antiprejudicial. Learning to think critically, students gain the tools to decode media messages, to challenge bias in curriculum and to be skeptical of stereotypes.

Institutional Support

Given the complex roles that families, peers, media may have on adolescents, schools remain powerful institutions of change. Educators wield great responsibility as teachers, role models and authority figures to their students. Teachers who are sensitive and committed to the educational goal of intergroup harmony have positive impact on the academic achievement of minority students and the general perceptions of such students. Classrooms where there are expectations and teacher behaviors that support a safe, respectful and positive learning environment go a long way in enhancing intergroup relations.

Research support the premise that schools and teachers can have a great impact on improving intergroup harmony by doing the following:

- Have in place clear policies that welcome and value diversity in the school environment.
- Have structures and procedures to take issue with and deal fairly and timely with any transgression of the school's diversity policy.
- Have teachers set the tone in classrooms so it is clearly understood that respect and celebration of differences is the norm.
- Have schools and classrooms reflect the diversity in their student population in the form of celebrations, displays and topics of discussion.
- Have teachers work in the school who reflect the diversity of the student population.

The activities included in the First Nations Education Steering Committee Anti-Racism Tool Kit are designed to be used with a wide range of school aged children and youth and adults. As with any resource dealing with controversial and sensitive issues, care must be taken that a safe learning environment is established before introducing the activity.

Every activity described in this kit requires that the learning environment be safe and that students feel comfortable talking about their differences. Any learning activity can result in unanticipated learning outcomes. Great care must be taken to ensure that the activities described in this kit are not used to reinforce stereotypes, to make fun of or belittle individuals and groups or to make people feel unsafe.

CLASSROOM RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Institutional support is an essential factor in enabling educational programs to promote intergroup harmony. For students to seriously consider initiatives designed to reduce prejudice, unlearn stereotypes and prevent discrimination, schools and classrooms must have in place policies that specifically talk about respect, fairness and accepting of differences. The following is presented as a template for individual schools and classrooms to design their own diversity and antiracist policies.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be indoctrinated to the ground rules that support a safe and positive learning environment.
- Students will learn through role modeling what it means to treat people fairly and with respect.

Procedure

At the earliest opportunity introduce to students, Classroom Rights and Responsibilities. Brainstorm what it means to treat people fairly and with respect. Some of the attributes and characteristics of fair play and respect put forward by students are:

- ✓ Wait your turn
- ✓ Share resources
- ✓ Be open minded
- ✓ Don't prejudge
- ✓ Listen before talking
- ✓ No name calling
- ✓ Do not use words that hurt
- ✓ Be courteous

Post the list in the classroom for future reference and reinforcement.

Classroom Rights and Responsibilities

- I have the right to learn.
- It is my responsibility to help myself and my classmates learn and not interfere with the learning of others.

- I have the right to hear and be heard.
- It is my responsibility to communicate and listen to others and not to interrupt when others are speaking.

- I have the right to be treated with respect.
- It is my responsibility to treat myself and others with respect.

- I have the right to be safe from physical and verbal violence.
- It is my responsibility to keep safe and not to physically or verbally hurt anyone.

- I have the right to be different and to be treated fairly.
- It is my responsibility to accept how I and others are different and to treat people fairly.

HYPNOSIS (adapted from A Joker's Guide to Theatre for Living,
by David Diamond, Headlines Theatre.

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Designed to have students understand what is meant by the ground rule that “people will be treated with respect”. Activity is low risk and provides opportunity for the teacher to create a “safe and comfortable learning environment” and for students to begin building trust with one another.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn that treating people with respect requires behaving in ways that do not harm or hurt others.
- Students will learn that one aspect of a safe and comfortable learning environment means that people respect other people's comfort level.

Procedure

Arrange furniture in the room so there are no obstacles in the way. Set out ground rules to insure that people should be treated with care and that participants feel safe in doing the activity, meaning that no one should be made to feel afraid to participate, that no one will be made to feel uncomfortable but that we should be willing to take risks if our safety and comfort is ensured.

The partner who is to be the leader holds the open palm of their hand 10 to 12 inches away from their partner's face. The person looking at the hand is “hypnotized” and is obliged to follow the hand wherever it goes. Take your partner on a journey around the room. Everything should be done in silence. Remember your role is to make this activity safe for your partner and to increase their trust in you. If they trust you, they will concentrate on your hand and ignore everything else happening in the room. For the next few minutes have your partner follow your hand around the room. Change roles, the leader now becomes the follower.

Debriefing notes for Hypnosis Activity

After both partners have had a turn being the leader gather everybody together in a large circle. Ask people to share their feelings in being the follower and leader. Which was easier? Why were you uncomfortable to start with? As the activity progressed, what made you more comfortable?

Brainstorm the factors that enhance trust. What are the factors that bring about mistrust? As a class develop a list of the factors that enhance the level of trust in the group. Post your list on flip chart paper and display it in your classroom for future reference.

SAME AND DIFFERENT

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

When studying differences, it is best to begin by looking at our similarities. This interactive activity is designed to define diversity as those human attributes and characteristics that define how we are both similar and different from others. Students will have an opportunity to learn about themselves and about each other.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will gain knowledge and an understanding about general human traits and characteristics. Particular attention should be paid to the traits and characteristics protected from discrimination as described in the B.C. Human Rights Code. i.e. family status, gender, physical and mental disabilities, place of origin, race, religion, etc.
- Students will learn that people are not only different but that they share many similar traits and values.
- Students will learn appropriate language and terminology referring to aspects of diversity.

Procedure

Organize small heterogeneous groups of between 4-6 students. On a sheet of paper or on flip chart paper make two columns. The left side is titled "Same" while the right side is titled "Different". This is a brainstorming activity with a time frame of no more than five to ten minutes for the brainstorming itself. The debriefing and ensuing discussion will take much longer. At the start of the activity identify as many of the traits and characteristics that all members of your group have in common. For example, if all of the members in your group are all boys or girls, write gender under the "Same" column. Continue brainstorming all the characteristics that the members of your group have in common, as in they all live in the same city, speak English, are able to walk, travel during holidays, do not go to Church on Sundays, have siblings, born outside of Canada, etc. When time is up, move to the right side column and identify the attributes that are different in your group. Brainstorm all of the traits that identify individuals in the group as different from one another, as we are different in that, some of us were born in and outside of Canada, we are of different ethnic and racial backgrounds, we have different hair colour, etc.

Debriefing notes for Same and Different Activity

Define, clarify as you debrief the similarities and differences evident in the group. Ensure that appropriate terms are used and that appropriate seriousness and respect is demonstrated during the discussion. This is an opportunity to define diversity as those human traits and characteristics that make us different and at the same time to recognize how much we have in common. A master list of some of the class similarities and differences can be posted in the room for future reference.

ROOTS AND ROUTES

Theoretical Basis for Activity

Co-operative activity designed for students to learn about their family “roots and routes” and the family backgrounds of others. The use of positive role models will facilitate the unlearning of negative stereotypes and enhance the self-concept of minority children and youth.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn research skills in their study of their family roots and routes.
- Students will learn about their own family roots and routes and the family backgrounds of others.
- Students will have opportunities to meet and learn from positive adult role models.

Step One

Identify and invite 3-6 adult resource guests to share with students information and stories of their family roots and routes. Their presentation should be based on the questions listed in Step Two. Resource guests should be selected for the purpose of presenting positive role models to students.

Step Two

The Roots and Routes activity will require everyone to have some knowledge about their family history (roots and routes). All of us come from immigrant backgrounds with the exception of First Nations People. Students will be asked to research their family backgrounds and to share the information with the group. Research family background by finding the answers to the following questions. *First Nation students will be asked to base their research on a series of parallel questions.*

- When did the first member of your family arrive in Canada? You can look at both sides of your family and approximate the time of their arrival. *When did the first member of your family arrive in the community you are currently living in?*
- From what part of the world did your family come from? *From what part of North America did your family come from?*

- For what reasons did they come to Canada?
For what reasons did they come to this part of Canada?
- Do you have a story about your family immigrant background that you can share with others? i.e. On arriving to Canada was your family name changed? *On the arrival of non-Native settlement in North America was your family name changed? Were other aspects of your culture forcibly changed?*

To assist students in telling their story ask them to bring to class an “artifact”. The artifact may be a photograph, a family heirloom, a steam ship, train or airline ticket, cultural symbol, anything that might act as a visual aid in the telling of their family story.

If you have access to a world map, students can be asked to mark their family’s routes on the world map by tracing their routes to Canada, starting from their family’s place of origin and stopping at the place or community in Canada where they settled. *First Nations students can indicate their roots by researching their family origins in North America.*

Step Three

Form heterogeneous family groups, making sure there is diversity in each group. As an example, in a class of 30 students, you may have five family groups each with six members, ensuring that there is a mix of ethnicity, gender, language background etc. in each family group.

If you have three resource guests, there will be required three expert groups. Create the expert groups by assigning two students in each family group to each of the three expert groups which will now have ten students. One resource guest will meet with each of the expert groups. Following each of the presentations expert group members will go back to their family group and share what they learned about their resource guest.

Step Four

Following the presentations made by resource guests and the subsequent reports made by expert group members to their family groups, family group members can begin the process of sharing their family roots and routes with others in their group.

DIVERSITY BINGO

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Interactive and didactic exercise designed to introduce students to concepts and issues related to anti-racism, prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Activity can be used as an introduction and catalyst for discussion.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will gain a knowledge and understanding of the following key concepts; prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. (see attachment, Definitions for prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination)

Procedure

Distribute copies of the Diversity Bingo Activity to students. Before starting the activity you may be required to explain some of the terminology used in the game. i.e. As in questions # 5 and #14, What is an extended family and family unit?

In each of the squares on the bingo sheet, there is a statement which begins with, "Find someone who ...". This is like a human scavenger hunt. You must find someone in the room who can answer the question imbedded in each statement. Once that person answers the question they can then sign their name in the corresponding square on your bingo sheet. Some of the questions require a yes or no answer, as in square #1. *Find someone who has a mother who works.* If someone responds to this question with, "Yes, my mother works in a hospital.", then they can sign that particular square on your bingo sheet. If the person you ask answers no, move on to another question. Once a person signs your bingo sheet, move on to someone else as each person can sign your sheet only once. Some of the squares require people to provide an answer beyond a simple yes or no response, as in square #2. *Find someone who knows why December 25th is a holiday.* They might answer by saying, "December 25th is Christmas Day and that's why it's a holiday".

The object of the game is to get as many signatures in the allotted time. (five to ten minutes) You can get someone to sign your bingo sheet only once. A person can sign many different bingo sheets, but they can only sign your bingo sheet once. When the allotted time is up, count the number of signatures you have. The person with the most signatures wins the game. As an option you can play the game as a team activity. Teams of three or more are given the task of combining the number of signatures they collect. The total number of different names collected by a team is used to determine the winner. You can always change/add your own questions to the activity.

Welcoming and Valuing Diversity In Your School

Diversity Bingo

1. Find someone who has a mother who works outside the home.	2. Find someone who knows why there is a school holiday on Dec. 25 th .	3. Find someone who knows how to phone someone who is deaf.	4. Find someone who has a family member who immigrated to Canada.	5. Find someone who has lived with a member of his or her extended family.
6. Find someone who hopes to get a job as a police officer, fire fighter, or flight attendant.	7. Find someone who knows what to do when someone in your group tells a joke that makes fun of someone.	8. Find someone who knows someone who has permission to park in a parking stall with this symbol. 	9. Find someone who remembers the saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words..."	10. Find someone who knows someone who rents the apartment or house they live in.
11. Find someone who has "anglicized" his or her name or has adopted an English name.	12. Find someone who can identify a food that is part of their culture.	13. Find someone who plans to get their driver's license when they are in high school.	14. Find someone who lives within a family unit.	15. Find someone who knows someone who has a "disability".
16. Find someone who learned English as a Second Language.	17. Find someone who has attended school outside of your community.	18. Find someone who speaks two or more languages.	19. Find someone who can identify a Canadian custom or tradition.	20. Find someone who knows who discovered North America.
21. Find someone who in some way is just like you.	22. Find someone who is getting old.	23. Find someone who has an accent.	24. Find someone who has witnessed an incident of discrimination.	25. Find someone who in some way is different from you.

Debriefing notes for the Diversity Bingo Activity:

<p>1. Find someone who has a mother who works outside the home. <i>(Opens the discussion to discrimination in employment. What types of jobs were women not permitted to do? What other groups were discriminated in the workplace? Is there still gender discrimination in today's workplace?)</i></p>	<p>2. Find someone who knows why there is a school holiday on Dec. 25th. <i>(Why is there a tradition of Christian days being school holidays and what should we do for people who have other religious days of celebration that are non-Christian?)</i></p>	<p>3. Find someone who knows how to telephone someone who is deaf. <i>(Look up the number in your area where you can use the Telus Relay Services. Learn how the service is used.)</i></p>	<p>4. Find someone who has a family member who immigrated to Canada. <i>(Everyone is an immigrant unless you are of First Nations background. Use as an intro to <u>Roots and Routes Activity</u>.)</i></p>	<p>5. Find someone who has lived with a member of his or her extended family. <i>(Extended family members may include relatives such as your grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins etc. Some children live with a parent or parents, others may live with extended family members. This is one example of how we are different.)</i></p>
<p>6. Find someone who hopes to get a job as a police officer, fire fighter or flight attendant. <i>(At one time women could not enter policing, fire fighting or medical professions. How and why have these professions now opened their doors to women and OTHER groups? What are the current job requirements today for police officers, fire fighters, flight attendants?)</i></p>	<p>7. Find someone who knows what to do when someone in your group tells a joke that makes fun of someone. <i>(It is okay to tell them it's wrong. It is okay to walk away. In what other safe and non-violent ways can you communicate the message that you do not like that kind of humor? Make up a role-play to demonstrate these strategies.)</i></p>	<p>8. Find someone who knows someone who has permission to park in a parking stall with this symbol.  <i>(Why are some people allowed to park in these designated parking stalls? This is what we refer to as providing "reasonable accommodation". What could you do if you see someone parking in a disabled parking stall who shouldn't be there?)</i></p>	<p>9. Find someone who remembers the saying "Sticks and stones will break my bones but words..." <i>(Do words hurt? What kinds of words hurt? Does your teacher, school have rules in place to prevent people from being hurt by words?)</i></p>	<p>10. Find someone who knows someone who rents the apartment or house they live in. <i>(What kinds of questions should you be allowed to ask a prospective renter? What kinds of questions should you not be allowed to ask? Can be used as an introduction to activity on human rights.)</i></p>

<p>11. Find someone who has "anglicized" his or her name or has adopted an English name. <i>(Why would people change their names to sound more English-like or be forced to take an English name?)</i></p>	<p>12. Find someone who can identify a food that is part of their culture. <i>(We all have a culture. Our backgrounds may also reflect a variety of cultures. What food dishes or products reflect your culture?)</i></p>	<p>13. Find someone who plans to get their driver's license when they are in high school. <i>(Is it fair that you cannot get a driver's license until you are 16? Are there other restrictions based on age? Are such restrictions fair?)</i></p>	<p>14. Find someone who lives within a family unit. <i>(Families come in all kinds of sizes, styles, colours and make-up. Some of us have more than two parents, some live with their extended family, some have parents who are of the same gender. What is a family?)</i></p>	<p>15. Find someone who knows someone who has a "disability". <i>(Are there students with disabilities at your school? Who are they? How are they accommodated in the school?)</i></p>
<p>16. Find someone who learned English as a Second Language. <i>(Why do people who are learning English feel more comfortable using their first language? When you hear people in your school speaking a language other than English, how does that make you feel?)</i></p>	<p>17. Find someone who has attended school outside of your community. <i>(What was it like to be a new student coming into a new school? Does your school have programs to assist new students? What could you do to help new students integrate?)</i></p>	<p>18. Find someone who speaks two or more languages. <i>(Having knowledge of a second language in addition to English is a very valuable asset. Do an inventory of the different languages spoken in your classroom.)</i></p>	<p>19. Find someone who can identify a Canadian custom or tradition. <i>(Make a list of those Canadian traditions, customs and values we should pass on to future generations. Discuss your ideas at home.)</i></p>	<p>20. Find someone who knows who discovered North America. <i>(Use as introduction to discuss First Nation topics, i.e. Early impact of European Colonization, Residential Schools, Land Claims)</i></p>
<p>21. Find someone who is just like you. <i>(It is important to know that while people are different from one another, people also share many similarities)</i></p>	<p>22. Find someone who is getting old. <i>(Stereotypes are negative generalizations about groups of people. Do we have stereotypes about old people, young people? What are some of the stereotypes we hold about other groups of people?)</i></p>	<p>23. Find someone who has an accent. <i>(Why would people make fun of others because of their accents, stuttering etc. Actually we all have accents. Next time you are traveling in the USA, someone will likely comment on your Canadian accent.)</i></p>	<p>24. Find someone who has witnessed an incident of discrimination. <i>(Why is this incident an example of discrimination? Listen to and read about stories that deal with discrimination. Invite guest speakers who have been victims of discrimination.)</i></p>	<p>25. Find someone who is different from you. <i>(Diversity is about being different. Differences should be welcomed and valued)</i></p>

What do the terms prejudice, stereotype and discrimination mean?

Prejudice – A set of negative attitudes or beliefs about a group of people. These preconceived notions are used to justify the idea that some groups of people because of their common traits and characteristics (as in skin colour or religion) are not as worthy compared to other groups.

Examples

- Women were seen as being inferior to men therefore could not vote. It was not until 1918 that the Canadian Parliament granted women the right to vote in federal elections.

Stereotype – Is a negative trait or characteristic that we believe most or all members of a group of people possess.

Examples

- Chinese people are bad drivers.

Discrimination – Is any action or behaviour that causes a person to be treated in an unfair, hurtful and negative way. People may discriminate because they have a prejudice against someone or because they have a stereotype of that person. People may discriminate without any intention to hurt someone but someone may still be hurt by their actions and behaviour.

Examples

- There is a prejudice that Aboriginal people do not have good work habits. There are stereotypes that Aboriginal people are not smart, that they are always late, that they are alcoholics. Discrimination occurs when a person is not given a job because they are Aboriginal.

CULTURAL BAG ACTIVITY

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Co-operative Learning Activity designed for students to learn about their own cultural background and the cultural backgrounds of others.

Is based on “Inside-Outside Study of Culture”, providing opportunities for students to become “experts” about their own culture as a prerequisite to learning about other cultures.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will become knowledgeable about their own cultural backgrounds through discussions with family members and friends.
- Students will learn about the cultural backgrounds of their classmates.

Step One

Form heterogeneous family groups, making sure there is diversity in each group. Groups are to be organized to facilitate group learning, interdependence among group members and individual accountability.

Step Two

Each member of the family group is to research the contents of their own cultural bag and then share and teach others in their group about their culture.

Our cultural bag contains all of our past and we carry it wherever we go. It is impossible to know about or to remember all of the items in our cultural bag. Therefore you must first talk to family members and close family friends to get information about the contents of your cultural bag. Some of the questions you might ask are:

- *What is your ethnic or cultural background?*
- *What kinds of traditions or customs do you follow?*
- *Do you follow a particular religion?*
- *What kind of family do you live in?*
- *What do you do during your leisure time and holidays?*
- *Are there any special days and celebrations that you practice?*
- *Do you have any family stories to share about your cultural background?*

Find items from home that you can “place in your cultural bag” and bring to school to show the members of your family group. You are the expert about the items in your cultural bag. It is your responsibility to share and teach the members of your family group about your culture.

The teacher can model the activity by sharing aspects and items from their cultural bag with their students.

Step Three

Every student will have an opportunity to share their culture with their family group.

Step Four

Create a class calendar indicating the variety of cultural celebrations, holidays, important days that are recognized by students in the class.

Comments

The Same and Different Activity would be an effective tool as a follow-up to the Cultural Bag Activity.



Cultural Bag Activity

We carry our cultural bag wherever we go. In (Teacher's Name) cultural bag you will find items that refer to him/her being:

-
-
-
-
-

What's in your cultural bag? What parts of your background would you find in your cultural bag? These items might refer to your ethnicity, where you grew up, your place in the family and other aspects of your life that makes you who you are. List some of your background characteristics below:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

THE UNFORTUNATE CASE OF MR. CHRISTIE

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Interactive role-play designed to provide opportunities for students to learn through vicarious experience. Through role-play students can learn to empathize with characters and their experiences.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will become knowledgeable about the history of discrimination in Canada
- Students will learn that human rights legislation is a relatively recent development in Canadian history
- Students will become knowledgeable about recent human rights rulings in British Columbia

Procedure

In May 1939, the courts in Canada made a ruling that typified the thinking of that time. Mr. Christie was a black man who was a season ticket holder to the Montreal Canadiens games played at the Montreal Forum. Located in the forum building was a tavern that was owned by York Corporation. One evening after a hockey game, Mr. Christie along with two friends, one white the other black went into the tavern and ordered a beer each. The waiter refused to serve Mr. Christie. When asked for the reason for not serving him, the waiter said, "I'm not supposed to serve coloured people." The police were called and the manager of the tavern stated again for the benefit of the police, "We do not serve coloured people here."

Mr. Christie and his friends left the tavern and eventually brought their case before the courts. Mr. Christie believed that as a Canadian he should have the right to be served in a public place like other people. The tavern owner's, York Corporation had a policy that prohibited service to "coloured people". As owners of the tavern they believed they had the right to refuse service to a person even if it is because of their race. Mr. Christie believed this was wrong.

The court ruled that "any merchant is free to deal as he may choose with any individual member of the public." The court recognized that the refusal to provide service to Mr. Christie was based on his race and colour but there were no laws in place at that time that prohibited such actions.

Present this case as a role-play. (see attached script.) Two people are required to take on the roles of the bartender at the tavern and Mr. Christie, the customer. Script and props are included in this kit.

At the end of the role-play, describe the court ruling against Mr. Christie. Are we surprised with this ruling? Human rights legislation was created to ensure that such actions that occurred against Mr. Christie would not happen today.

Debriefing notes for the Unfortunate Case of Mr. Christie role play

Following the role-play have students discuss the following questions and activities:

- The event you just witnessed occurred in 1939. Could a similar incident occur today? Research incidents of discrimination by reading through copies of the B.C. Human Rights Commission Annual Reports. Make a list of the different forms of discrimination that have taken place in B.C.
- How has the law in Canada changed since 1939?
Mr. Christie was discriminated because of his race and colour. Create a role-play similar to Mr. Christie's case depicting different forms of discrimination and present the role-play in class.
- What anti-discrimination policies exist in your community, school district and school?
- March 21st is designated by the United Nations as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. What events will be occurring in your community and school to commemorate this day? You can contact the office for the Government of Canada's, Heritage Canada (Pacific and Yukon Region 604-666-0176) and Province of B.C., Multiculturalism and Immigration (Enquiry BC 1-800-663-7867) for information about organizing your own March 21st event.

Script for Christie Role-Play

Mr. Christie (wearing hockey jersey) enters tavern and sits at a nearby chair and calls to the waiter who is standing at the other side of the room:

Mr. Christie - “ Good Evening.... I’ll have a glass of beer please.”

Waiter (carrying pencil and pad to take down orders) walks over to Mr. Christie:

Waiter - “I’m sorry sir but we can’t serve you tonight.”

Mr. Christie, looking surprised:

Mr. Christie - “What do you mean you can’t serve me. I’ve been coming into this tavern after every game... is there something wrong with my money?”

Waiter, getting a little defensive:

Waiter - “Well there’s nothing wrong with your money, it’s just that we’re under new management and there are some new rules here. (pauses for effect) You see sir, the new rule is that we can’t serve coloured people anymore. And you being black, I guess that means you.”

Mr. Christie, getting quite angry now:

Mr. Christie - “I don’t see why my race should have anything to do with me getting any service in your tavern.”

Waiter, still speaking in a calm voice:

Waiter - “Please sir, but if you don’t quiet down I’ll be forced to call the police.”

Mr. Christie, shouting at the waiter:

Mr. Christie - “Go ahead call the police, I’m not doing anything wrong.”

Waiter, still calm replies to Mr. Christie’s outburst:

Waiter - “I’m sorry sir but you leave me no choice. (Pick up the phone and pretend to dial the police) I’m sorry to bother you but I have a very angry customer here who refuses to leave the tavern. You better come over and remove him from here, this is private property.”

END OF ROLE PLAY

THE NIGEL HOWARD CASE STUDY

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Interactive role-play designed to provide opportunities for students to learn through vicarious experience. Through role-play students can learn to empathize with characters and their experiences.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn about the “disadvantage” of having a hearing disability.
- Students will gain a knowledge and understanding of the concept of reasonable accommodation.
- Students will be able to recognize examples of reasonable accommodation in a variety of circumstances.

Procedure

The following case study is based on an actual incident. Nigel Howard was a student attending the University of British Columbia. He is deaf. He communicates by using American Sign Language. When communicating with hearing people who do not know how to “sign”, Mr. Howard can read lips and communicates through written notes, but these methods are very tiring and difficult. As a student at the university, Mr. Howard quickly found that it was very difficult to understand what his teachers and classmates were saying in class.

Mr. Howard decided that the only way he could get an equal opportunity to a university education was to have the university provide an “interpreter” in his classes. The interpreter through the use of sign language would convey to Mr. Howard what was being communicated in the classroom. The protocol for using an interpreter is that you should always speak to and look at the deaf person. The interpreter is there for the deaf person.

To get some understanding of Mr. Howard’s problem, have a student put on ear protectors. Move the student to different areas in the classroom and proceed with normal classroom activities. At this point, **make no attempts to alter or change your normal activities in your classroom.** Repeat the process with different students.

Have the “deaf” students share their experience in the classroom. The exchange can be set up as in a “talk show” format. The two students should sit at the front of the class and the teacher or another student can act as the “host”. Encourage questions from the “audience”.

Debriefing notes for the Nigel Howard Case Study

Reasonable accommodation is any means or strategy that is used to ensure that a person or group have equal opportunities. Buildings that are designed to be wheelchair accessible, hospitals providing translation and interpretation services for people whose first language is not English, workplaces that allow employees to take time off with pay for important religious holidays are all examples of reasonable accommodations.

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that human rights legislation direct employers and organizations that operate services that are available to the public (i.e. restaurants, hotels, schools, parks) have a legal responsibility to provide reasonable accommodation up to a point of undue hardship. Without reasonable accommodation a person because of their disability, religion, family status, ethnicity could face discrimination.

In the case of Nigel Howard the discrimination that he faced while not intentional was still very real to Mr. Howard. In the human rights ruling that ordered the University of British Columbia to provide interpretation services for Mr. Howard, it was noted that, “The effect on deaf people is beyond their control. No matter how well they read lips, they cannot read the lips of a professor whose back is turned or a student who speaks unexpectedly from behind them, nor can they hear the soundtrack of a video presentation. I find that there is a burden on deaf students that is not imposed on other students and that they are adversely affected by the absence of interpreters in the classroom. I also find that this burden constitutes discrimination on the basis of physical disability.” (Howard v University of British Columbia, page 15)

The following questions can be used to begin a discussion about the concept of reasonable accommodation.

- ✓ Should the university be responsible for providing a signer for Nigel Howard?
- ✓ Do you have special needs students in your class or school? Who are they, what is their disability, how can you get to know them better?
- ✓ Are Education Assistants provided for the special needs students?
- ✓ Why are Educational Assistants provided for special needs students?
- ✓ Is providing educational Assistants for special needs students and not for “typical” students fair?

HEADS AND SHOULDERS KNEES AND TOES

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Experiential and interactive activity designed to illustrate what happens when one finds oneself in a new and challenging environment.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will appreciate the frustration and confusion that occurs when one finds oneself in a situation where a language different from their own is dominant.
- Students will gain empathy for people in this situation.

Procedure

Divide the class into small heterogeneous groups. Identify one person from each group to be the “teacher”. Their task is to teach the members of the group a new language. In this new language the words might sound familiar but their meanings are different from what we are used to. For example, the word head does not refer to the part of our body that houses our brain but in fact refers to the ten digits sticking out from our feet. The “teacher” has only a few minutes to teach this new language before we are tested. The test consists of the group singing a song that most of us are familiar with; “Heads and shoulders knees and toes...” a song many of us sang in our early childhood years. Again, the words might sound familiar but they now have new meanings.

Once everyone has “learned” the new language, gather in a circle and as the teacher, lead everyone in the new song, with appropriate hand and body motions. Good luck and have fun!!!

Debriefing Notes

The object of the activity is to have students vicariously experience some of the frustration and confusion experienced by people who learned English as an additional language and must now cope in an English language world. Care must be taken not to trivialize the experience but to highlight such issues as;

- The frustration of knowing what you want to say but unsure how to say it.
- The confusion of trying to participate and keep pace in an environment where your own language is not used.

Before

Now

Head
Shoulders
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Toes
Eyes
Ears
Mouth
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Toes
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Heads
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Ears
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Before

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WORDS THAT HURT

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

To be effective, educational programs that promote intergroup harmony require institutional support. For students to seriously consider initiatives designed to reduce prejudice, unlearn stereotypes and prevent discrimination, schools and classrooms must have in place policies and procedures that specifically talk about respect, fairness and accepting of differences. The following case study is presented as a template for intervention when “words that hurt” occur in the classroom.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be indoctrinated to the ground rules that support a safe and positive learning environment.
- Students will learn through teacher intervention what words hurt and why they should not be used.

Procedure

At the earliest opportunity introduce to students, Classroom Rights and Responsibilities. (see enclosed activity) A posted list of the attributes of treating people fairly and with respect should be displayed in the classroom for future reference and reinforcement. Some of the items on the list may include the following:

- ✓ Wait your turn
- ✓ Share resources
- ✓ Be open minded
- ✓ Don't prejudge
- ✓ Listen before talking
- ✓ No name calling
- ✓ Do not use words that hurt
- ✓ Be courteous

It is best to have a plan in place should a “word that hurts” is used in the classroom. It is never appropriate to belittle or embarrass someone in public. It is best to first deal with the “word that hurts” and not the individual who uttered the term. The objective of the intervention is to see a change in behavior and that is best done by:

- Making it clear that the term used falls in the category of a “word that hurts” and therefore contravenes Classroom Rights and Responsibilities.

- Explaining the reasons why the word is hurtful so that students understand their negative impact, intentional or unintentional.
- Understanding the student's reason for using the term.
- When appropriate, providing alternative words that can be used instead of the "word that hurts".
- Being diligent in reinforcing appropriate behavior and dealing with inappropriate behavior in a timely fashion.

Case Study – “That’s So Gay!”

Teacher – “Even though we have a short week due to the long weekend, we will still have our weekend quiz this Friday.”

Student – “That’s so gay!”

Teacher – “I’m sorry Haron, what are you trying to say? I mean what’s your thought about having a quiz this Friday?”

Student – “Nothing”

Teacher – After waiting 10 seconds. “No, you have a thought, an opinion about it and I really want to know what it is.”

Student – “Well, it only gives us four days instead of five to prepare.”

Teacher – “A reasonable point. If we postpone the quiz to Monday, we’ll have the same problem next week. An idea... the quiz this week will only be 10 questions instead of the usual 15. I’ll take into consideration that you have only four days instead of five to prepare.” pause “ As for the other words you used to indicate your concerns and displeasure about the timeline, those words are inappropriate because they can be hurtful. If there was something else that you had an issue with and you responded with ‘That’s so Chinese’, I would be hurt by that statement. It would seem to me that Chinese meant that you had a negative thought about something and that Chinese was a word to indicate something not very positive. When I hear “that’s so gay” it sends me a negative message about people who are homosexual. Remember what our ground rules are...”

Of course it would be expected that this discourse would be more of a back and forth discussion between teacher, student and students.

Classroom Rights and Responsibilities

- I have the right to learn.
- It is my responsibility to help myself and my classmates learn and not interfere with the learning of others.

- I have the right to hear and be heard.
- It is my responsibility to communicate and listen to others and not to interrupt when others are speaking.

- I have the right to be treated with respect.
- It is my responsibility to treat myself and others with respect.

- I have the right to be safe from physical and verbal violence.
- It is my responsibility to keep safe and not to physically or verbally hurt anyone.

- I have the right to be different and to be treated fairly.
- It is my responsibility to accept how I and others are different and to treat people fairly.

LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LIVE

Theoretical Framework for the Activity

Didactic learning activity designed to teach the concepts of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the concept of prejudice.
- Students will understand how stereotyping can cloud people's judgment.
- Students will learn that the B.C. Human Rights Code protects people from discrimination when looking for a place to live.
- Students will be able to identify the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the B.C. Human Rights Code.

Procedure

Have students describe their current domiciles. If anyone is currently renting their home discuss the different methods in finding a place to rent. Create a fictitious apartment/home that the class is now offering to rent. What kinds of characteristics in a prospective renter should the class be looking for?

Present to students the attached case study, Finding a Place to Live.

Debriefing notes for case study, Finding a Place to Live

The case study is based on an actual incident adjudicated by the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal. The human rights decision is attached to this activity. Reinforce the learning from your discussion of the case study, Finding a Place to Live with the Application to Rent exercise.

Have your students research the for rent classifieds to identify possible infractions of the B.C. Human Rights Code.

Looking for a Place to Live

Doris worked for a Senior's Home in Prince George where she was a personal care attendant. She is currently on social assistance. She has two sons, her 12-year-old son Justin and William who just turned 15. They have just moved to the Vancouver area from Prince George. Rhonda is a childhood friend of Doris from Prince George. Rhonda has lived in the Vancouver area for five years and works as a sales clerk at the Salvation Army Thrift Store. Rhonda is currently living in a small studio apartment. Doris along with her two sons and Rhonda plan to rent a house together.

When Doris arrived to the Vancouver area she immediately looked at homes to rent. One duplex seemed just right. They met with the owner Mr. Lee and paid him one month's rent as deposit. The next month, Doris and Rhonda rented a moving van and moved their belongings to the duplex. Mr. Lee was not at the home with the keys but Mrs. Lee his wife was at the house instead. Mrs. Lee was initially quite friendly but then asked Doris what nationality she was. Doris stated she was Cree originally from Calgary and before Rhonda could answer Mrs. Lee responded with, "I don't rent to Indians." She also told Doris and Rhonda that "Indians stay up all night partying." that "they have people over all the time, all hours of the night," and "they always have cars coming and going."

Doris and Rhonda left the duplex without moving in their belongings and attempted to contact Mr. Lee. He eventually left them a message stating that he was sorry for the mix up, but in fact his wife owned the duplex and that the deposit was being mailed back to them.

Doris and Rhonda made an official complaint to the BC Human Rights Commission, stating that they were being discriminated against.

Discussion Questions

1. Does the BC Human Rights Code protect Doris and Rhonda's right to rent?
2. Mrs. Lee is the rightful owner of the duplex and therefore she believes she has the right to rent her property to whomever she wants to. Is this fair?
3. Have some students argue Mrs. Lee side to this case and another group of students argue the case for Doris and Rhonda. Determine whether or not there was any discrimination against Doris and Rhonda in this case study?
4. Use the attached rental information form to review the BC Human Rights Code as it relates to the right to rent.

* See attached BC Human Rights Tribunal Decision (DesRosiers v. Manhas) that is the basis for this case study.

HAPPY HOMES ENTERPRISES – LANDLORD OF FINE HOMES
“OUR GOAL IS TO HELP YOU FIND A HAPPY HOME TO CALL YOUR OWN!”

APPLICATION TO RENT

Name of Applicant: (Last Name) _____
(First Name) _____

Names and Age of others who will reside in the rental home:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Present and Past Employer's Name:

Current Employer: _____

Previous Employer: _____

Please Provide Two Credit and Two Personal References:

Credit Reference: _____

Personal Reference: _____

Please Answer the Following Questions

Do you own any pets? Yes _____ No _____

Do you smoke? Yes _____ No _____

Do you have a criminal record? Yes _____ No _____

Were you born in Canada? Yes _____ No _____

Are you married? Yes _____ No _____

Do you have young children? Yes _____ No _____

What is your religious background? _____

**Are there any questions on this form that would
be against the B.C. Human Rights Code**

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS CODE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

Didactic learning activity designed to teach the key features of the B.C. Human Rights Code.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will gain a knowledge and understanding of the protected areas covered under the B.C. Human Rights Code
- Students will gain a knowledge and understanding of the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the B.C. Human Rights Code
- Students will be able to apply the code in different situations

Procedure

The quiz (see attachment) may be presented as an individual or small group activity. When done in small groups, the group is to discuss each question and attempt to reach a consensus on each item. The quiz is a vehicle to illustrate how far we have come in protecting Canadians from discrimination.

Debriefing notes for the quiz

1. In Canada we have Human Rights Laws that protect us from different forms of discrimination.

4true false

The human rights of all Canadians are protected by law throughout Canada. People living in B.C. are protected from discrimination by the B.C. Human Rights Code. (www.bchrt.gov.bc.ca)

For Further Discussion;

- How have Canadians been discriminated in the past?
- Identify current examples of discrimination in Canada?

2. It is against the law to place a job advertisement in the newspaper that states;

“Downtown International School requires female English teachers to teach English to foreign students.”

4true false

The B.C. Human Rights Code specifically protects us from discrimination in employment. There is no compelling reason (bona fide occupational requirement) to restrict the hiring of English teachers to the female gender. This advertisement is in contravention of the code in that it discriminates on the basis of gender.

For Further Discussion;

- Search through the want ads and identify any advertisements that may contravene the human rights code.
- Research different occupations to see how the requirements for the job have changed over time.

3. A landlord cannot refuse to rent an apartment to someone because they have young children.

4true false

The code prohibits discrimination in tenancy premises. In this case, the prohibited ground of discrimination is family status.

For Further Discussion;

- Research the classifieds and determine what characteristics are landlords looking for in prospective renters. Which characteristics are grounds for discrimination as defined in the code?

4. A blind person can take their seeing eye dog onto a public transit bus.

4true false

This question looks at how the code protects us from discrimination when we use services that are generally available to the public. In this case, public transportation is such a service and to refuse a blind person with their seeing eye dog onto the bus would be discrimination on the basis of physical disability.

For Further Discussion;

- Brainstorm a list of services that are generally available to the public. Research Canada's history in discrimination in the area of service.
- Are there groups in Canada still facing discrimination in obtaining services generally available to the public?

5. Name calling is something that shouldn't happen and there are laws against it.

4true false

Harassment has been defined through case law as the use of behavior and words as a form of discrimination that is prohibited under the human rights code. Name calling, whether in the form of racist, sexist terms, words that make fun of people with disabilities, or language used to ridicule, intimidate or bully people because of their sexual orientation are all forms of discrimination.

For Further Discussion;

- Research what policies against harassment and bullying exist in your school and school district.
- Create an anti-harassment policy for your classroom.

See attached B.C. Human Rights Tribunal Decision regarding racial harassment in the workplace, Florence Jack v. Ed Nichol.

What you should know about the B.C. Human Rights Code

1. In Canada we have human rights laws that protect us from different forms of discrimination.

true false

2. It is against the code to place a job advertisement in the newspaper that states;

“Downtown International School requires female English teachers to teach English to foreign students.”

true false

3. A landlord cannot refuse to rent an apartment to someone because they have young children.

true false

4. A blind person can take their seeing eye dog onto a public transit bus.

true false

5. Name-calling is something that should not happen and there are laws against it.

true false

POSITIVE ROLE MODELS IN THE CLASSROOM

Theoretical Basis for the Activity

The use of positive role models in the classroom will facilitate the unlearning of negative stereotypes and will widen students' experience with people of diverse backgrounds. Bringing in resource guests of diverse backgrounds will also enhance the self-esteem of minority students.

Learning outcomes

- Students will have opportunities to challenge stereotypes they hold about various groups of people.
- Students will meet and learn about people from diverse backgrounds.

Procedure

Through a process of networking with various community groups in your area, compile a list of guest speakers to present on a variety of topics. It is important to select individuals who have a positive and interesting story to tell and that they represent groups of people who are often stereotyped. A demographic inventory of the make-up of your classroom will indicate what backgrounds of resource guests are required.

Corporal Baltej Singh Dhillon is an example of such a guest speaker. His story of becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is quite riveting and the prejudice and discrimination he faced in that process is a story worth sharing.

Constable Ray Wong and his canine partner Bear were featured in the news in January 2002, though it was an incident both of them would rather have not experienced. See attached biographies.

Baltej Singh Dhillon immigrated to Canada from Malaysia in 1983 with his mother and three siblings. As a young man of seventeen years of age, he entered Frank Hurt Secondary School in Surrey and took his place with his Grade 11 classmates unsure of his future in Canada.

(PLACE
PHOTOGRAPH
HERE)

Diligent effort, unfailing commitment and dedicated faith resulted in Baltej Singh Dhillon in August of 1990 becoming the first Sikh to wear a turban in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. His religion is an important part of his life and his wearing of the turban is a symbol of his belief and faith. Despite protests from some quarters in Canada, including threats to his personal safety, Baltej persevered and today is a Corporal in the RCMP currently stationed in Vancouver as a member of the Air India task Force investigating and gathering evidence for the 1985 bombing on an Air India flight which resulted in the deaths of over 300 passengers and crew, many of whom were Canadian citizens. His work takes him to all parts of the world, including England, India, Japan and the United States.

From his first posting in the British Columbian town of Quesnel to his current station in Vancouver, Baltej has always believed in giving back to the community. He has visited countless schools to speak about community policing and his journey to become a police officer and in such a capacity has been a positive role model as a member of the Sikh community. In speaking to students Baltej often talks about the demanding and grueling months in his initial training in Regina. How a young man born in Malaysia, growing up as a teenager in Surrey, B.C. having to survive his first winter in Regina, gained much self-discipline and self-confidence in his early police training. As for his advice to young people, "Follow your dreams and do not compromise on your values, beliefs and high moral values. Do what you think is right. Follow the path of truth and you will never go wrong. As long as the intentions are good, one shall always win. And remember to be grateful to people who help you achieve your goals".

Baltej is married and a father of two young daughters, who he hopes might follow a career in policing.

Constable Ray Wong and Bear

The news headline read “ Police Officer Saves Canine Partner’s Life.” The work of a police officer is always potentially dangerous and as was shown on January 31, 2002, similar risks shadow the life of their canine partners. Following what was to be more than the routine investigation at a Vancouver residential break and enter, Constable Ray Wong and his police dog Bear literally walked into situation that nearly killed Bear.

As a young child attending his older sister’s wedding in Victoria, Ray’s attention to the details of the wedding party wandered to the event taking place at the next door arena. Sneaking over to take a closer look, Ray was transfixed by the majesty and dignity of the performing RCMP Musical Ride. From that point on Ray diligently applied himself to his goal of becoming a police officer. Not that this would be an easy task, like many immigrants coming to Canada, Ray’s parents arrived in 1960 to Victoria, B.C. with the intent of making a better life for their children and having their youngest son take on the risky job of policing was not what they initially had in mind.

Ray was steadfast in his pursuit of his chosen career, to the point where as a Grade 10 student, Ray “forged” his father’s signature on the permission form allowing him take part in a work experience program with the Saanich Police Department. Only recently did Ray’s father learn the truth about that incident. All this time Mr. Wong believed his son was learning how to be an accountant or working in a dentist’s office during his work experience.

Constable Wong is currently in his 11th year with the Vancouver police Department and his family has great pride in his work as they especially were back in January of 2002.

"As we left the residence and we're walking along the sidewalk, Bear started to yelp and whine," explained Vancouver Police Const. Ray Wong. "Bear at that time fell over onto his side and started convulsing. His legs were rigid, and his muscles were as hard as a rock. His eyes had rolled back and his tongue fell out and was turning purple and blue." Bear had stepped on an exposed electrical plate. Two hundred and forty volts of electricity coursed through his body. Wong was also electrocuted when he pulled his canine partner away. "It was quite apparent he was in cardiac arrest," said Wong. "We couldn't find a pulse and he wasn't breathing. I immediately began CPR on my partner - chest compressions and breathing into his nose. But panic was setting in and I was watching my dog die in front of my eyes." With a police escort, Bear was rushed to an emergency animal clinic. Veterinarians say they can't believe he survived. "It was very emotional," said Wong. "I was watching him die in front of my eyes." But thanks to Constable Wong and other police members, Bear has made a full recovery and the two of them continue to work the streets of Vancouver. "To see something that you love and not be able to help until your thoughts could be focused on what the problem was... like I said at first I thought it was a seizure, but I'm just glad he's alive."

Constable Ray Wong and Bear

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Ray was steadfast in his pursuit of his chosen career, to the point where as a Grade 10 student, Ray asked his father if he would sign the permission form allowing him take part in a work experience program with the Saanich Police Department. Mr. Wong believed the occupation of a police officer was too dangerous and refused to sign the permission form. Ray was so adamant in pursuing his future career he “forged” his father’s signature. To this day, Mr. Wong does not know his “endorsement” of that form. After graduating from Mt. Douglas High School, Ray went on to Simon Fraser University and received a Bachelor of Arts “Criminology and Psychology” Degree in 1991.

Constable Wong is currently in his 11th year with the Vancouver police Department and his family has great pride in his work as they especially were back in January of 2002.

"As we left the residence and we're walking along the sidewalk, Bear started to yelp and whine," explained Vancouver Police Const. Ray Wong. "Bear at that time fell over onto his side and started convulsing. His legs were rigid, and his muscles were as hard as a rock. His eyes had rolled back and his tongue fell out and was turning purple and blue." Bear had stepped on an exposed electrical plate. Two hundred and forty volts of electricity coursed through his body. Wong was also electrocuted when he pulled his canine partner away. "It was quite apparent he was in cardiac arrest," said Wong. "We couldn't find a pulse and he wasn't breathing. I immediately began CPR on my partner - chest compressions and breathing into his nose. But panic was setting in and I was watching my dog die in front of my eyes." With a police escort, Bear was rushed to an emergency animal clinic. Veterinarians say they can't believe he survived. "It was very emotional," said Wong. "I was watching him die in front of my eyes." But thanks to Constable Wong and other police members, Bear has made a full recovery and the two of them continue to work the streets of Vancouver. "To see something that you love and not be able to help until your thoughts could be focused on what the problem was... like I said at first I thought it was a seizure, but I'm just glad he's alive."