



Facilitating a Group Agreement

A group agreement has been a key factor in helping The Spark create a safe environment for tackling sectarianism. Topics such as sectarianism can sometimes raise challenging and controversial opinions. A group agreement in session one gives participants and facilitators a strong foundation to create a trusting, safe and productive working relationship within the group to promote discussion around Sectarianism.

How we facilitate a group agreement:

The Spark CYP team have learnt that session one is clearly the “anchor” for the sessions to follow. We begin each new group with a group agreement where participants are asked what they think would help working together in a group. Whilst taking their suggestions on-board, we ensure that the following is included in the agreement:

1. Confidentiality – what is said in the room stays in the room;
2. Behaviour – no swinging on chairs, no speaking over each other, no physical contact, no eating or drinking, Phones off!
3. Respect – we ask the group for a definition of this
4. Listening – pay attention and hear what others are saying. Explain that we recognise that they have been chosen to come to the group and how do they feel about that?
5. No bullying – bullying can be: verbal; physical, social and psychological

Their contribution to the agreement helps to create ownership. If the group begins to stray from any of these points the Youth Development Worker stops the session and reminds them about their agreement. It also helps to set the scene of our non-judgemental, honest and open approach.

We have noted that initially, some participants take longer to speak out which could be lack of confidence or it may be that they are not familiar with expressing an opinion in a group due to lack of engagement in formal education.

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Appointments: 0845 271 2711

The Relationship Helpline: 0808 802 2088