

Compassion & Empathy Charities

Generosity
Compassion
Empathy Service



“For me, I am driven by two main philosophies: know more today about the world than I knew yesterday and lessen the suffering of others. You’d be surprised how far that gets you.”

Neil deGrasse Tyson

Activity 1



Aim(s)

- To put compassion into a real life context.



Resources

- Flipchart paper and pens.
- Internet connection for research. **OPTIONAL**
- *Charities* Information Sheet.



Delivery Guide



This can be completed as a whole class, or in small groups.

Part I

Ask the young people what charities they know, whether they’ve had contact with them, or just heard of them. You can brainstorm them using the A-Z format if you want to – ie. try to think of at least one charity for each letter of the alphabet. This can be run as a competitive activity, with points for each charity they manage to come up with.

Part II

Have a look at these charities:

Red Nose Day
Macmillan Cancer Charity
WaterAid

Samaritans
Cancer Research UK
PDSA

Give the young people some time to do some research about each charity or use the *Charities Information Sheet* provided. How did each of the charities start, and what do they do now? Ask the young people to think about what part **compassion** and/or **empathy** play in all of this?

Who was showing compassion? Did feeling empathy or compassion contribute to the reason someone started these charities, or why they grew so much?

Points to highlight

- Compassion and empathy for others can motivate people to take action and go out and help.

Activity 2

Aim(s)

- To think about putting compassion into action.

Resources

- *Your Charity Worksheet.* **OPTIONAL**
- *Compassion and Charities* Power Point, slide 1. **OPTIONAL**

Delivery Guide



This is best completed in small groups.

Ask the young people to imagine that they were given the opportunity to set up a charity. What charity would they start? Think about these questions:

- **What problem would you try and solve?**

You can look as widely as you want. Try to think about the situations in the world – or in your own neighbourhood – that you feel passionate about. Ideas could include:

Homelessness

Refugees fleeing war

People suffering with drug and alcohol addiction

Animals being mistreated or neglected

Elderly people being abused

Young people struggling to find work

People suffering from a particular disease or illness

- **Where would your charity work?**

Would it focus on the UK or in another country? Maybe it would work worldwide? Maybe it would be even more local and work in a particular UK city or town. This might be determined

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■ **Where would your charity work?**

Would it focus on the UK or in another country? Maybe it would work worldwide? Maybe it would be even more local and work in a particular UK city or town. This might be determined by the problem you are trying to solve, or it might be a practical decision depending on the experiences you have or how much you understand about the country (could you solve problems in Russia if you don't know anything about the country or communities or causes of the problems?).

■ **What actions would your charity take to try and solve that problem?**

For instance:

*Providing homes for people who are homeless
Connecting employers with young people needing jobs
Doing research to try and find a cure for a disease or illness
Running a hospital for mistreated animals
Raising money for refugees*

■ **Where is your funding going to come from?**

How are you going to buy the things you need (clothes for people, resources, etc)? Donations from supporters? Will you run events or get people to do sponsored challenges? Will you apply for grants from other charities or trusts, or money from the government? Will the people who give you the money want you to do things a certain way?

■ **What is your charity called?**

Think about who it helps and what problem you want to solve – but also make it catchy!

■ **How are you going to tell people about your charity?**

Who is going to care about your charity? Will you have a website? Will you advertise it in the newspaper, or hold events?

They can go as deep and as detailed as they want to, depending on their interest. You could get them to present back to you or the rest of the group as a kind of 'Dragons Den' game, to bid for (imaginary!) money to start their charity.

Points to highlight

- There is an 'action' attached to compassion – you can feel compassion, but you should try to act on it too.
- Charities and the people who set them up are often driven by compassion – someone sees a problem and they want to help.

Activity 3



Aim(s)

- To explore the limitations of compassion.



Resources

- Internet Connection to watch YouTube videos.
- *Compassion and Charities* Power Point (slide 2-4).



Delivery Guide

Part I

Ask the young people to think about the questions on the *Compassion and Charities* Power Point slide:

Is compassion always a good thing?

If someone is driven by compassion, do they always do good?

Things that might come up in response include:

- Sometimes people feel compassion but they aren't sure how to help, so they do the wrong thing.
- If someone has a problem, they might want to solve it themselves.
- Sometimes people think they know everything, and don't listen to other people.
- If you feel too much compassion, you might not be able to make good decisions or do the right thing.

Part II

Introduce Kids Company. Kids Company was a charity set up by Camila Batmanghelidjh to help inner-city young people in Liverpool, Bristol and London; these young people had 'fallen through the net' and were often thought to be ignored by Social Services and other organisations. The charity was closed in 2015 after complaints about bad management and misuse of money, and a big media investigation.

Watch the short video about Kids Company being shut down or have a look at the BBC article:

Kids Company troubles:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujRAsA1tSfU

Reaction to Kids Company closing:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVIXHKLbcjU

What happened to Kids Company - BBC:
(all available 8/16)

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-33788415

Ask the young people to think about the following questions:

- What happened?
- What do you think went wrong?
- What good did Kids Company do? What damage did they cause?
- What part did compassion play?
- Should they have closed Kids Company?

Part III

Have you ever felt compassion for someone, but made the wrong choice and done something that's made their situation worse?



Facilitators can join in and share their own thoughts and experiences.

Points to highlight

- Feeling compassion is sometimes not enough – it might encourage you to do things that are going to make the situation worse.
- You have to use wisdom to make good choices to actually help people.



Links to Other Areas of the Curriculum

Computer literacy:

The research into charities in Activity 2 can be linked with developing internet research skills.

