

# HOLE IN MY LIFE

Homelessness and The Salvation Army

## Lesson Activities for 14-16 year olds

### Introduction

Here are a range of activities aimed at 14-16 year old pupils relating to Homelessness Services within The Salvation Army. These activities can form part of a lesson or talk and focus on enabling pupils to reflect on how The Salvation Army tries to support homeless people in rebuilding their lives as well as reflecting on their own opinions on the causes and solutions of homelessness in the UK.

### 1. Video and Discussion

The following three videos can all be found on The Salvation Army YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/salvationarmyvideo](http://www.youtube.com/salvationarmyvideo). Each video is a different length and could form part of an extended lesson/talk on homelessness. A set of discussion questions is provided for each video

Here are some ideas for using the questions or alternative activities to follow the clips:

- Ask the students to form small groups to discuss the questions and jot down their notes. Then feed back to the whole class.
- Use the questions in a large group discussion
- Rather than using the questions below, you could instead ask the students to write down two things they thought were important and two questions they have to discuss as a class at the end.

Swan Lodge, Sunderland

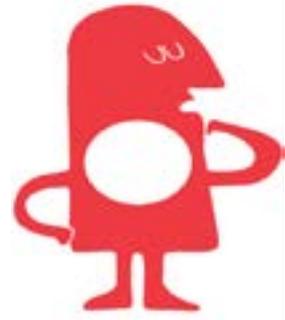
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mOusbm7gfA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mOusbm7gfA)

(Video is approx 10 minutes)

### Discussion Questions

- What are some of the reasons why Craig became homeless? What feelings did Craig express at being homeless? What words did he use to describe them?
- In what ways did Swan Lodge help Craig?
- How did Craig's belief in God help him overcome his addiction?
- Why is dignity and self-respect so important? How does homelessness take this away?
- How does Swan Lodge help residents regain their dignity and self-respect?
- How does a Lifehouse like Swan Lodge offer a different approach to homelessness from a standard hostel?





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## **The Sandwich People, Booth House, Swindon**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXa\\_OX-vWpg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXa_OX-vWpg)

(Video is approx 13 minutes)

### Discussion Questions

- What is a social enterprise? How does 'The Sandwich People' represent a social enterprise?
- What are the aims of 'The Sandwich People'?
- How does being involved with 'The Sandwich People' make a difference to the volunteers involved?
- What is the tag line / slogan of 'The Sandwich People'? In what ways is this outworked in practice?
- In what other ways does Booth House support its residents?
- If you were to set up a social enterprise to assist homeless people, what would it be?

## **Cardiff Bus Project, Cardiff**

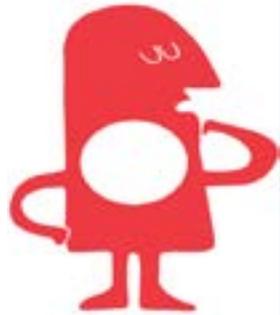
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrcFc6UJ6Dk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrcFc6UJ6Dk)

(Video is approx 5 minutes)

### Discussion Questions

- Who uses the Cardiff Bus Project? What services does the Cardiff Bus Project offer?
- What difference does the bus make to rough sleepers in the city?
- What motivates The Salvation Army volunteers involved in this project?
- How has this video enhanced/changed your understanding of homelessness?





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## 2. Lifehouse Services

In this activity students are asked to consider some of the many services that a Lifehouse offers - see examples below. Students are asked to rank each service in order of those that they personally feel would be of most benefit to them if they were homeless and had come to live in a Lifehouse. There are no right or wrong answers - this is simply to start the students thinking about what help a homeless person may need and why.

You could put these on to cards and ask pairs to put them in the order of 'most important' to 'least important'. Once everyone has completed this, ask each pair to join another pair and compare their lists. You could then ask for feedback on the differences in opinions.

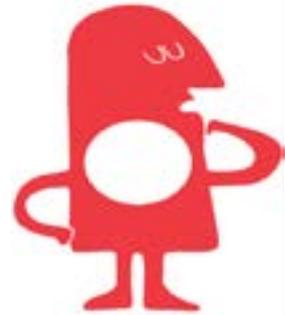
- A bed
- Bathroom
- Private room
- Cooking facilities
- Something to do during the day
- Have fun
- Make friends
- Someone to help you access benefits
- Someone to help you get your own place
- Someone to help you with personal problems, eg, alcohol or drug use, anger management, money management
- Somewhere to watch TV
- Opportunity to learn some new skills or get a qualification
- Access to laundry facilities
- Somewhere to pray

## 3. There's A Hole In My Life

This activity focuses on the idea of the 'hole' that people can feel in their lives. It aims to encourage students to think about what the hole could be, what people fill the hole with, and what we all need in order to live satisfied and fulfilled lives.

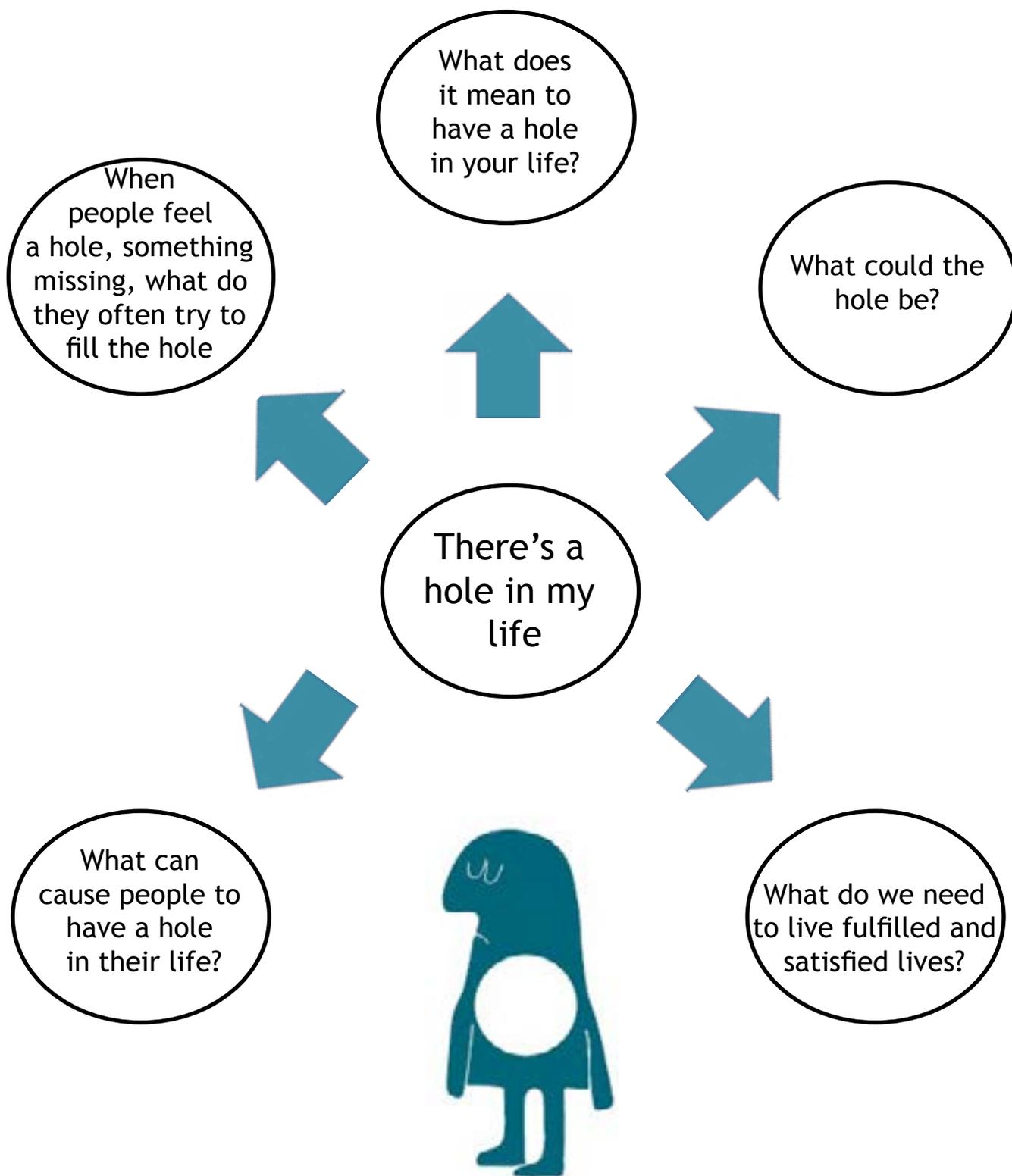
Write each question (as shown on the next page) on a separate sheet of large paper. Spread the sheets around the room leaving a few felt-tip pens at each sheet. In groups, students go around each sheet spending three minutes at each one and jotting down any ideas that they may have in answer to these questions. When they have completed the final sheet, ask the group that is at that sheet to feed back some of the answers to the whole class, adding anything obvious that has been missed. Allow further discussion if needed/appropriate.

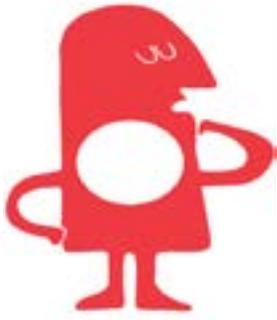




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## 4. Agree/Disagree Statements

This exercise could be done by indicating to students an imaginary line through the room, one end representing 'strongly agree', the other 'strongly disagree'. Students move physically to place themselves along the continuum according to their opinion on the statements below. If appropriate, one or two students could then be asked to say why they have chosen to stand where they are. It is important during this exercise that all students feel that their opinion is valid and that it is OK to disagree with another person. There are no strictly right or wrong answers but the facilitator can carefully explain another point of view if it seems there is some very strong stereotyping amongst the group.

If there is limited space in the room and a continuum line isn't possible, you could alternatively give students 'agree'/'disagree'/'unsure' cards that they hold up when the statement is read out. Again you could ask pupils to share contrasting opinions.

- People who live on the streets only have themselves to blame.
- People who live on the streets are basically too lazy to get a job.
- Everyone should experience a night sleeping rough to appreciate what they have.
- Many people end up homeless because of relationship breakdown, addictions or mental health
- If we provide sufficient affordable housing, homelessness will end.
- Homeless people are different from me. I could never become homeless.
- We will never get rid of homelessness.

## 5. Solutions

The statements in the next page express feelings and barriers sometimes experienced by people who are homeless. The idea of this activity is to ask the students to consider what the 'solutions' could be for each of these feelings/barriers. What would the opposite emotion be and how could someone be helped to get to a place where they feel and experience the opposite emotions in their life? This activity should begin to illustrate that purpose and relationships are key aspects of a whole and fulfilled life and are often missing for people who are homeless.

You could give one of the statements below to a small group and ask them to write down the opposite emotions and ideas to get from A to B.

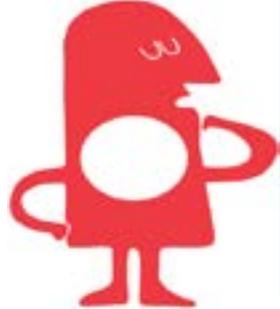
For help or advice with these resources contact the Schools and Colleges Unit:

0207367 4706

[schools@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:schools@salvationarmy.org.uk)



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A. Feelings/barriers sometimes experienced by someone who is homeless	B. Opposite emotions	Ideas to help someone get from A to B.
“Nothing to get up for in the morning. Boredom. Destructive habits. No identity. No self-respect. Can’t see a future.”		
‘No friends. No family. No trust. Can’t communicate. Frustration. Depression. Anger. Despair.’		
‘No one sees my progress. I’m not appreciated. No one sees I’m trying. No motivation. I can’t succeed at anything.’		
“No training. No job. No work experience. No-one taking a chance on me.”		

