



Exploring Leadership

SOCIAL AWARENESS: TOLERANCE

Today's youth face rapid changes as they explore new places, learn new things, and meet a wider range of people and cultures than ever before. To succeed in this diverse world, they need to develop *tolerance* and respect for others.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

How do you feel when someone treats you poorly, and how does it affect how you respond? On the other hand, how do you usually respond when someone greets you warmly?

When you treat others with kindness, respect, and integrity, don't you think they're likely to respond the same way? It's easy to recognize that if people treat you kindly, your life feels more peaceful. By responding kindly, you can avoid creating negative feelings and instead build positive relationships.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Understand tolerance as accepting and respecting people for who they are.
- Learn to treat others with the same respect you wish to receive.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A variety of familiar and popular snack foods on a tray.
- Computer/projector to watch this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/3A07yC5jQ28> (3 minutes long)

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

In this engaging activity, youth will participate in a taste-testing simulation to explore the ideas of inclusion and exclusion. They'll see how rules can impact feelings of belonging and understand the importance of creating inclusive spaces.

FACILITATION TIPS:

- Intervene when you see intolerant behavior.
- Use positive comments to encourage and reinforce respectful behavior.
- End on a positive note by inviting all participants to enjoy the snacks together, reinforcing the message that everyone deserves respect and inclusion.
- Start by telling the group they will take part in a fun taste-testing simulation.
- Show the snacks on a tray to create excitement and encourage them to notice any physical reactions—like anticipation or salivation!
- Create a rule that allows only some participants to taste the snacks—e.g., 'Only those wearing shoes with laces may participate'—and explain this rule clearly to everyone.
- Split into groups of those who can taste and those who cannot taste.
- Listen to their reactions and ask them how they feel about being included or excluded.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- How did this activity make you feel? Invite each group to share their thoughts.
- How were you different from others, and in what ways were you the same?
- Do you think this activity was fair? Why or why not?
- What does diversity mean to you?
- How would you define tolerance?
- Why do you think tolerance and diversity are important in our lives?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- Have you ever received tolerance or kindness from someone? How did it make you feel?
- Who in your life is a role model for tolerance and respect?
- What are the benefits of putting others' feelings before our own?
- We all serve as examples or role models for others. How can you model tolerance and respect for your friends and family every day?
- Reflect on a time you may have struggled with tolerance toward someone. How does it feel to think about that experience now?



CONCLUSION:

Just one simple greeting can make a big difference in someone's life. As Helen Keller once said, "The highest result of education is tolerance." When we take the time to notice others and treat them with kindness, we create a more welcoming world where everyone feels they belong.

Serve the snacks while watching the 3-minute YouTube film [Hello by Richard Galapate](#). This inspiring video won the Students' category at the Nikon Cinema Z Film Festival in 2019. It's a powerful reminder that something as small as saying "hello" can help people feel seen, valued, and connected.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of a world filled with more tolerance and respect than the one he lived in. He believed every person deserves dignity and understanding and worked to create a more inclusive society for all. Following his example, we can each help others feel accepted—one kind action at a time.

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REFERENCES

- 6 Lesson Plans for Teaching Tolerance <https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/6-lesson-plans-for-teaching-tolerance/>
- HELLO - a short film about tolerance & diversity <https://youtu.be/3A07yC5jQ28> (3:00 minutes)