



Equality Matters



Why should equality matter to you?

Everyone has the right to live and work in an environment where they are treated fairly and with respect. We all have a responsibility to prevent harassment or bullying taking place and ensuring a good, safe environment. We all should be aware of the issues that are facing people within our local and wider community in order to be a valued member of society.



The Gift

Have you ever had the opportunity to truly say sorry to another person?

The current BBC1 series called The Gift saw one man being given the opportunity to apologise and heal some of the harm he caused another boy through his school years. The act of bullying can be one of the most powerful and painful times for a child.

Bullying can present itself in many forms, we first think of physical and verbal bullying. But it all has a psychological effect on its victims. In recent years we have seen bullying infect social media and electronic devices. This new wave of bullying has given bullies a certain level of anonymity, leading to serious cases against children. For many of us we have experienced bullying first hand and for all of us we know someone who has been bullied. Unfortunately it doesn't stop once you leave the playground, it is happening in many work place situations, effecting adults as well as children.

Follow this link to watch the first episode of The Gift and ask yourself could you offer the gift of forgiveness?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b052sqj7>

What is FGM? I hear you ask.

Well, FGM is Female Genital Mutilation. It effects 150 million women a year, not only in Africa and Asia, but also in Europe, the USA and Australia. It could have happened to someone living in your town.

Laws against this activity are still patchy and campaigns like STOP FGM NOW.com are working to bring justice for the women subjected to this disfigurement.

The reasons behind this mutilation are to inhibit a women's sexual feelings. In many cases this is performed before puberty but in recent cases it is increasingly performed on new born babies and in many countries without any pain relief.

This is one of those tough equality topics, when raised it can make people feel uncomfortable and unable to discuss however it is happening and it matters. Visit these websites to learn more about this much hidden topic.

<http://www.stop-fgm-now.com/>

<http://www.desertflowerfoundation.org/en/what-is-fgm/>



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What is grooming?

We have all heard the term, but do we really understand what it is all about.

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. It does not just effect children.

Together Against Grooming (TAG) is a project that is being led by the social enterprise Better Futures Together (Charity Commission Registration no. 1140166). TAG has been established to work with others to respond to the issue of sexual exploitation of children and vulnerable young people and they are part of the Community Alliance against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE).



<http://www.taguk.org/>

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and.../grooming/>

Protected Characteristics

The work place and media will continue to present new equality challenges that test our rights to feel safe and included but we mustn't forget the backbone of equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

There are 9 Protected Characteristics which means that under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'.

And they are; Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Believe, Sex and Sexual Orientation.

Looking at the list above, you can see that we all fit into more than one characteristic so we could all be subjected to discrimination.

Keep Talking About Equality, It Matters!

We face many challenges within our everyday lives and equality, for many of us, is not one of them. Or is it?

If you have ever questioned something that has happened at work or thought about something someone may have said that made you feel uncomfortable or hurt? Then equality has effected you.

It is true that we all make judgements of other people, that is human nature, but it is what we do with that judgement that counts. We all have the power to make a difference.

Go on, talk to someone about equality today



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