



Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Standing Up in our Communities Classroom Activity

As part of Stand Up Awareness Week this year, the theme is “Standing Up in our Communities”. A great way to develop an understanding of the communities that an individual is connected to is by creating an ecomap and having students understand the interconnection between different communities.

What is an ecomap? An ecomap is a visual representation of a person’s partnerships, relationships and connections within their environment. It can help with mapping out the connections and crossovers that we have within our lives.

When creating an ecomap, you may want to consider some of the below categories:

- **Family**
- **Friends**
- **Education**
- **Neighbours**
- **Hobbies**
- **Jobs**

Lesson Plan: Creating an Ecomap

Starter – 5 minutes

1. Begin by asking students what they think an ecomap is
2. Explain what an ecomap is – it is a visual representation of a person's connections within their environment
3. Link the ecomap as a tool to the theme of this year's Stand Up Awareness Week. We are encouraging students to reflect on the multiple connections they have within their communities, and to use this influence to engage their communities in showing their support for Stand Up Awareness Week.
4. Use examples to illustrate the concept of an ecomap to ensure that students are familiar with the concept

Activity – 15 minutes

1. Split students into small groups
2. Allow students time to brainstorm ideas and to create a list of people, groups and communities that they are connected to
3. Encourage students to think about their family, friends, communities, school, clubs, hobbies and interests
4. If there are lots of ideas, you may want to encourage conversation around the connection between each of these different groups

Creating the ecomap – 25 minutes or longer if time allows

1. Provide each group with a large sheet of paper or canvas depending on what they are creating
2. Display the PowerPoint slide with the sample ecomap for illustrative purposes.
3. Request students to place themselves in the centre of the paper and to begin to add in the other connections from the discussions that they had in their small groups
4. Encourage students to think of the connections between each of the different groups that they are drawing. For example, if a member of a sports club, are their brother or sister a member of the same club?
5. Encourage reflection on how students could engage with their communities to show support for LGBTQ+ inclusion and Stand Up Awareness Week.

Discussion - 15 minutes

1. Ask each group to present their ecomap to the class

2. Ask students to share their thoughts and feelings on their ecomap – Possibly discuss the overlap between students' ecomaps.
3. Discuss the similarities and the differences between the different ecomaps presented by the students. For example, students may have identified that their siblings work in the same local shop or cafe or attend the same music practice. Encourage the discussion of the connection between these communities.

Conclusion - 5 minutes

1. Summarise the key concepts of an ecomap and how it links to this year's theme for Stand Up Awareness Week: "Standing Up in Our Communities".