

## **The winter conference**

for GB's children and youth leaders

**3 November 2018**

St Luke's Church Centre,  
Great Colmore Street, Edgbaston, B15  
2AT

Including ....

# **volumise**

## **Volumise - a resource for equipping children and young people**

**GB is a place for all of God's people: promoting kindness, inclusion and a sense of belonging**

### **What's this resource?**

This resource is based on the Volumise equipping session held at Girls' Brigade's conference in November 2018 focusing on how we can support children and young people with additional needs in our GB groups.

The session was led by Mark Arnold, Additional Needs Ministry Director at Christian children's and youth organisation Urban Saints. Mark is also the Co-Founder of the Additional Needs Alliance, a vibrant and fast-growing online community. He's an enthusiastic national and international advocate for children and young people with additional (special) needs or disabilities and is passionate about enabling everyone engaging with them to be inspired, trained and well resourced.

This resource has been produced to help you, as leaders, run a practical session with the young people you work with to address the wider issues of kindness, belonging and inclusion. It will encourage GB members to make sure that GB is a place of belonging for all of God's people.

It's also accompanied by another resource which can help you as leaders to multiply the learning from this session with others leaders in your group, local area and region. These resources are complimented with four video clips of Mark Arnold equipping and inspiring you as you share and engage with the material. Do check out the Volumise section within the GB leaders' online resource base to access these supporting videos.

Our God is an all-inclusive God and we want to ensure our work with young people in Girls' Brigade is equally as inclusive and accessible.

The resource contains four sections to help you do this including:

1. Engage: To help children and young people understand the importance of being kind
2. Equip: To help equip young people to understand the importance of moving belong labels and make GB a place of belonging for all
3. Empower: To help young people explore how Jesus's encounters with disabled people were transforming
4. Embrace: To celebrate everyone's God-given worth

### **Why is it important?**

There are many children and young people living with additional needs and disabilities in the UK. Here are some key facts:

- There are approximately 193,707 children of school age in the UK who have a learning disability (MENCAP)
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are twice as likely as other children to be bullied regularly (IoE 2014)

- Over 90% of the families that include a child or young person with additional needs have no contact with a church – this is a massive door of opportunity for GB to reach out to families.

Girls' Brigade is passionate about responding to the needs of children, young people and sharing the positive, hope-filled message of the Gospel. We trust that this Volumise resource will equip you to explore diversity and inclusion and promote a sense of belonging for all with your GB group in fun, innovative and significant ways.

### Where should I use it?

The resource is flexible and can be used in a variety of settings:

GB groups – you could have a theme night around kindness and belonging and encourage the girls you already work with to bring a friend

Why not use some of the activities to run a workshop or assembly in a local school? You can then encourage the girls who attend to come along to your GB group to find out more or to join the online koko community.

Remember that you don't need to do every activity – pick and choose the ones that are most relevant to your group.

### Let's get started!

#### ENGAGE

##### Aim

- To help children and young people understand the importance of being kind and inclusive.

#### ACTIVITY #1: Walk apart - walk together

This activity helps young people recognise the differences among people, as well as the many similarities people share.

Ask two volunteers to come forward and stand with their backs together. Ask the rest of the group to call out things about these two volunteers that are different. Explain differences sometimes pull us apart. As each difference is called, the volunteers take one step apart. When they reach the end of the available space, have them turn and face each other. Now, ask the audience to call out similarities of the volunteers. As each similarity is called out, the volunteers take one step towards each other.

Discuss with the group:

1. Think about the things that were noted as differences. How many were things that we can easily see (hair colour, skin colour, dress, abilities, wearing glasses or not, etc.)?
2. What were some of the similarities? While certain physical characteristics are similar, many other similarities are not so visible. Perhaps both individuals are enthusiastic or both have similar interests or goals in life.
3. Talk about the importance of the differences and of the similarities among members of the group. Be sure to talk about the importance of accepting and welcoming all members into the GB group.

#### ACTIVITY #2: Be kind

You'll need: Two long lengths of paper (each of the two lengths should be the height of one of your young people - wallpaper would work best), and a thick felt-tip.

Ask the young people to draw an outline of a person onto each piece of paper by drawing around someone in the group.

Ask one group to write kind things that we can do to show other people that we care about them in the outline of one of the people – challenge them to think about different contexts: at home, at school, in their community and in GB.

Ask the other group to write general types of unkind things that people do to each other in the outline of the other person – challenge them to think about different contexts: at home, at school, in their community and in GB. Please be careful to de-personalise the conversation.

Once they've created their two people, bring them together as a group and ask for some feedback. Suggest some more kind and/or uncaring qualities at the end if you think they're missing any key ones.

You should now have two outlines of people. One filled with examples of kindness and unkindness.

Explain that we want GB to be a place of kindness and belonging for everyone – no matter what they look like, ability, skin colour etc. Looking at the examples of kindness, ask the group to identify three or four examples of kindness that they think it's most important for everyone to commit to doing in GB. Encourage them to commit to making kindness a daily action in their everyday life so everyone can be happy at GB and feel like it's a place that they belong.

### ACTIVITY #3: koko film

Watch the koko *Dare to Care* video which can be found in the GB leaders' online resource base or on the koko website ([www.thekokostory.com](http://www.thekokostory.com)).

After watching the video, ask the group to discuss the following questions:

- Can you share one thing – a word or image – that really struck you from the film?
- Did the film change your view of kindness. If so, how?
- What are some of the challenges of being kind every day?
- What are the different ways that you could 'dare to care' this week? Get the group to write a list.

koko and GB wants to help create a world where all of God's people flourish and have their God-given worth and dignity. Encourage your group to share this video on their social media platforms using #daretocare and #kindness.

### EQUIP

Aim:

- To help equip young people to understand the importance of moving beyond labels and make GB a place of belonging for all.

### ACTIVITY #1: Label activity

You'll need: Blank labels (one per young person). On the labels, write:

- Smile at me
- Say hi
- Pat me on the back
- Shake my hand
- Give me five

On 10% of the labels, write 'Turn away from me'.

This activity helps young people experience the effects of inclusion and exclusion in a simulated activity.

Begin the activity by asking the young people if they think we sometimes label people because they belong to different groups. Tell them that the labels we put on people often limit their participation in groups, even in GB.

Give each young person a label and ask them to put it on their foreheads so that they can't see what it says. Distribute the labels randomly. Ask everyone to remain quiet and not reveal to each other what their labels say.

When everyone has a label, ask the young people to get up and mill around as if they were in the lunch room at school or at GB. Remind them that they shouldn't reveal what is on anyone else's label. Let the group mingle for four to five minutes, responding to people according to what's on their label, then ask them to return to their seats without looking at their labels.

Afterwards, discuss the following questions:

1. How were you feeling?
2. Without looking at your label, do you know what it says? How do you know?
3. All of you who think you have the 'Turn away from me' label, please come and stand together in front of the room. How did you feel?

Allow the young people to look at their labels now. Explain that all of us have experienced times when we felt like we were wearing a 'Turn away from me' label — when we felt left out or targeted. However, some groups experience this more than others, even regularly.

What groups in society seem to have a 'Turn away from me' label on them? Some examples include people with disabilities, people of a different religion, people of a different race, people who speak with an accent, and underprivileged people.

Remind them that no one said anything negative to them; it was just in our non-verbal communication - our body language and our expressions. Without words, they got the message. Point out that 94% of all communication is non-verbal. We need to pay close attention to our body language and non-verbal expressions as well as our words.

End with the following additional questions:

- What can we do to change our non-verbal behaviour to help everyone feel included?
- What do people from groups that are left out or excluded sometimes do? Sometimes they get together and form their own groups and isolate themselves; perhaps this happened during this activity.

## **ACTIVITY #2: Build and learn**

You'll need: Ear defenders, scarves, visual impairment glasses, oven gloves, something to build with such as LEGO/ Meccano, and printed instructions to build a tower.

Divide the young people up into groups of about four to six. Depending on the number of small groups that you have got:

- Have one group wear ear defenders so they can't hear each other very well
- Put scarves around the eyes of the young people in another group so they can't see
- If you have access to some, give one group some glasses that simulate visual impairment e.g. [www.optimalowvision.co.uk/product.cfm?prod=474&dept=479](http://www.optimalowvision.co.uk/product.cfm?prod=474&dept=479)
- Use scarves to tie the wrists of the young people in another group together (their own wrists, not to each other!)
- Have another group that wears oven gloves or large mittens
- Have one group that doesn't wear any of these things.

Give each group something to build with e.g. LEGO or Meccano, or even canes or rolls of newspaper and string or sticky tape, and some printed instructions to build a tower. Give them five minutes to follow the instructions to build the tower. You could, for added difficulty and if appropriate, have versions of the instructions in other languages that members of your group use and give these to the groups that can still see (and that don't include someone who uses that language).

After five minutes, stop them and see how they've got on. They probably won't have got very far!

Now mix the groups up so that each group has someone who can't hear, someone who can't see, someone who is wearing the gloves etc. Give them five minutes again to build the tower, and make sure they realise that everyone must help e.g. the person whose wrists are tied could read the instructions, the person who can't see could hold something, the person who can't hear can be shown what to do etc. They must all work together if they're going to succeed. If you've used instructions in other languages, make sure someone who can read that language is now in the group.

After five minutes, stop them again and see if all the groups have done better now that they're working inclusively.

Ask them what this experience has been like for them. Encourage the young people to always think to include everyone, and that by all working together we can all learn and do more.

## **ACTIVITY #3: Amplifying voices**

It's always good to amplify the voices of people who other people regard as 'different'. Connection helps young people to see the similarities between people as well as each person's God-given worth.

If there's a member of your church who has a disability or an additional need or even a past member of the GB group (it would be great if they're a person of faith), invite them to come and join you for the night. Include them in activities so they're part of the group and can build relationships informally. Also allow some time for a brief Q&A perhaps over hot chocolate. Start the conversation by asking any of the following questions:

- I. What is life like with your disability? Try and draw out similarities as well as differences.

1. Are there things that other people do that you find helpful/unhelpful? Why? Why not?
2. Complete the sentence: One thing that I wish people knew...
3. How has faith made a difference to your life?

#### **ACTIVITY #4: Makaton**

Being able to communicate is one of the most important skills we need in life. Almost everything we do involves communication; everyday tasks such as learning at school, asking for food and drink, sorting out problems, making friends and having fun. These all rely on our ability to communicate with each other.

Young people communicate in a variety of ways and many young people with additional needs may communicate using British Sign Language or Makaton.

Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It's designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. See here to learn how to say 'hello' in Makaton: [www.makaton.org/Assets/Store/FreeResources/HelloSong.pdf](http://www.makaton.org/Assets/Store/FreeResources/HelloSong.pdf)

#### **ACTIVITY #5: Inclusive games**

Here are some ideas for new games and activities that everyone, regardless of ability, can participate in:

##### **Boccia**

Boccia (pronounced 'botcha') is similar to bowls and many other ball tossing games. It's totally inclusive and can be played by anyone regardless of age, ability or disability. It's a game of skill and subtlety so physical strength isn't important.

For more info on how to play: Search Google or <http://www.sportsuk.org.uk/olympic-lessons/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/PE-Lesson-Plans-KSI.pdf>

##### **Goalball**

Goalball is a three-a-side team game developed for blind and partially-sighted players but sighted players can also play. The object of the game is to score a goal by throwing the ball along the floor so that it crosses the goal line of the opposing team.

For more info on how to play: Search Google or [https://www.yourschoolgames.com/uploads/file/InterFormat\\_GoalBall-web.pdf](https://www.yourschoolgames.com/uploads/file/InterFormat_GoalBall-web.pdf)

##### **Zone Hockey**

Zone Hockey is an indoor court game based on Unihoc that provides opportunities for non-disabled and disabled players inclusively.

For more info on how to play: Search Google or [https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adapted\\_sports/adapted\\_games/zone\\_hockey/index.html](https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adapted_sports/adapted_games/zone_hockey/index.html)

[Activity taken from the GB Europe Additional Needs resource: [www.gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com](http://www.gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com)]

#### **EMPOWER**

##### **Aim:**

- To help young people explore how Jesus's encounters with disabled people were transforming

#### **ACTIVITY #1: Our all inclusive God**

You'll need: Bibles.

This activity explores how Jesus's encounters with disabled people were transforming and how this can teach us that the Church is a place for all of God's people.

Spilt the group into two and ask one group to read the story of Bartimaeus in Mark Ch.10:46-52 and the other the story of the paralysed man in Mark Ch.2:1-12. Discuss the following questions in groups:

- What do you think life was like for Bartimaeus/the paralysed man? How did other people treat them?
- Is there anything surprising about how Jesus interacted with Bartimaeus/the paralysed man?

Explain that Jesus met lots of disabled people during His ministry, and His interaction with them was always positive, although sometimes we only focus on the healing that took place and not on the other really important messages that Jesus taught us during those encounters. Jesus didn't assume and neither should we.

We should always ask others with additional needs and disabilities how can we serve them. Let's think about the man who was lowered through the roof by his friends. The most important to Jesus wasn't the fact that the man was disabled; the most important thing was his faith... the most important thing was the person rather than their disability. What do we see first, the person or the disability?

### **ACTIVITY #2: Choose kindness**

You'll need: A ball of string.

Explain God encourages His people to be kind to one another, even enemies.

Read Colossian Ch.3:12 from The Message:

*'So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.'*

Explain that just like putting on your clothes every morning, being kind is a choice that we have to make every minute of every day.

Stand together in a circle. The first person holds onto the end of the string and says 'I'm going to make a choice to be kind this week by...' and then throws the string to someone else across the circle. Invite everyone to say how they're going to be kinder. Once everyone has spoken you should have a web of string.

Explain when we all make choices like you've made we soon have this brilliant network of kindness around us. If you can trust them to lean back on the string and support each other's weight then let them try it. Just like you're holding each other up, we can be a support for people when we're kind and we care.

### **CREATIVE PRAYER ACTIVITY #1: Fearfully and wonderfully made**

Show a picture or write the words 'You're fearfully and wonderfully made - Psalm 139:14' on flipchart paper. Play a worship song in the background and ask the group to quietly reflect on these words

Explain that this verse reveals a number of truths – each of us is precious to God and He's interested in us because He created us.

Too often life's challenges can leave us feeling like God is distant, or that we don't matter. But the Bible teaches us that there's no where we can go from God's presence and no matter what we are going through He is with us.

Take a moment to encourage the young people to reflect on their own uniqueness and the uniqueness of people around them. Close in prayer.

### **EMBRACE**

Aim:

- To celebrate each person's unique God-given worth.

Choose from the following activities:

### **CREATIVE PRAYER ACTIVITY #1: Shine your light**

You'll need: Two battery-operated tea lights (glow sticks as a substitute) per person, and the equipment to show a short video.

Watch the Apostles Creed film, presented by people of all ages, abilities, genders: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFuZpFJ5q0Y&frags=pl%2Cwn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFuZpFJ5q0Y&frags=pl%2Cwn)

Explain that what the man lowered through the roof, Bartimaeus, and many more people that Jesus met, most got from encountering Him was love. The same goes for us; He loves us for who we are.

With the first tea light, invite the group to thank Jesus for who He has made them to be and all that He's doing through them, re-committing themselves to Him having been reminded of the words from the Apostles Creed. Ask them to bring their tea light to the front individually to make a collective statement of shining God's light together. Ask the group to take a second tea light home with them as a reminder that God goes with them and His light spreads out across the country with them.

## ACTIVITY #1: Acts of kindness

At the end of koko's *Dare to Care* film, Meg challenges us all to 'dare to care.' Split the group up into smaller groups of three to four. Ask them, in their small groups, to agree to do one kind thing for each other during the week (i.e. if there is a small group of three, young person 'A' will do one kind thing for 'B' and 'C' during the week, 'B' for 'A' and 'C', and so on). Kind things could be sending someone a card, or going to see them, or inviting them for tea, or helping them with their homework or to walk the dog.

Now ask the young people to think about someone else they know who has additional needs or a disability, maybe in their family, at school or church. Ask them to agree to do one kind thing for that person this week too. Kind things could be saying hello to them when they see them, or holding the door open for them so they can get through easier, sending them a card, or doing something to help them like some shopping. Get them to write their acts of kindness down, and who they're going to do them for, so they don't forget.

Agree that next week you'll share stories of how the group has been kind to people, how that made them feel, and how it made the group feel.

## ACTIVITY #2: Building each other up

You'll need: Envelopes, pieces of paper, and pens.

Give each young person a blank envelope and ask them to write their name on it, then place it somewhere in the room (slightly hidden!). Once everyone has done it, gather the group together and explain that you're going to put on some worship music and they can go and find someone's envelope. Once they've found an envelope they need to write something positive about that person on a piece of paper, place it in the envelope and pray for them. Then put the envelope back and go on to find another envelope and pray for that person etc. until you say stop.

## Further GB resources

Our regular programmes unpack themes like inclusion, kindness and belonging in more detail – why don't you delve in further? Here are some examples...

- **n:vestigate** – *Helpful People, Our Group, Our Friends, God's Family.*
- **n:gage** – *Dorcas, Jonathan, Pharaoh's daughter, Ruth.*
- **n:counta** – *Working Together, Relationships, GB Values.*
- **n:spire** – *Love, Community.*

## GB Europe's Additional Needs resource

The revised edition of the GB Europe's Additional Needs resource was launched in 2017 with the aim of equipping and resourcing GB leaders in their important ministry to children and young people.

This new revised edition includes:

- Definitions, impact and practical tips for working with children and young people who have additional needs like ADHD, Autism and Tourette's Syndrome
- New topics like mental health
- New sections on how to engage young people with faith and ideas of inclusive games and sports
- Up-to-date language
- Up-to-date further information links.

The resource is free and easy to download here: [www.gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com](http://www.gbeuropeprojects.jimdo.com). If you attended GB's November 2018 conference, you can also find it on your USB stick. Please do circulate it to your GB leaders. You may find it helpful to have a copy when you're facilitating the sessions below.

## Additional resources

[www.additionalneedsalliance.org.uk](http://www.additionalneedsalliance.org.uk) - Additional Needs Alliance helps churches and youth organisations to include, support, create places of belonging for, and spiritually grow children, young people and young adults with additional needs or disabilities. It has a great resource dropbox.

**[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)** – Mencap is the leading voice of learning disability UK. They aim to support people with a learning disability, and their families and carers. Their vision is a world where people with a learning disability are valued equally, listened to and included.

**[www.thinktwiceinfo.org](http://www.thinktwiceinfo.org)** - ThinkTwice assists others in their own struggles, and those who stand beside them. Their aim is to increase awareness and decrease stigma so that people are able to be open about their mental health. They provide training courses, consultancy and speakers and writers.

**[www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/108634/Mind\\_and\\_Soul.aspx](http://www.mindandsoul.info/Groups/108634/Mind_and_Soul.aspx)** - In many churches and health-care settings Christianity and mental health are kept deliberately separate. Mental health is rarely discussed in churches and Christian spirituality is seen as having little to offer the world of psychology. Mind and Soul aims to change this.