

WHAT IF...? SCENARIOS



Summary

The *What if...? Scenarios* activity is designed to assess young people's awareness and knowledge of available support services they could access for help or in an emergency.



Keywords

Group activity
Cross sectional data (snapshot)
Qualitative data
Discussion
Learning
Youth participation



Participant Use



Participant Evaluation



Resources

Whiteboard and markers
1 x facilitator



Group Activity



Time

Set up: Development of scenarios (15-30 minutes brainstorming session with group)
Implementation: 5-10 minutes per scenario



Frequency of use

Periodically to assess participants' knowledge of support services



How to Use This Tool

This activity uses real-life scenarios to assess program participants' awareness and knowledge of available support services as well as access to support from family, friends or peers. The scenarios are developed in conjunction with young people to ensure they reflect real-life situations.

The *What if...? Scenarios* activity requires a facilitator. This can be an adult e.g. the program coordinator, or the activity can be peer-led i.e. a young person from the group who has been attending the group for some time facilitates the activity.

The facilitator describes each '*What if...?*' scenario and asks the group what they would do in each situation. For example, for a young mothers' group one of the scenarios might be '*What if you could not get your baby to stop crying in the middle of the night? What would you do?*' The facilitator encourages the group to offer suggestions including actions they might take, people or services they would call.

One of the benefits of this activity is that young people are able to learn from their peers who may have experienced one or more of the scenarios. The activity also provides an opportunity for young people to consider how they might react when faced with a certain situation that they have not yet faced but may quite likely be confronted with.

The activity promotes group discussion and participation and the length of the activity can be tailored to the time available e.g. if only 15 minutes discussion time is available, 1 or 2 scenarios may be discussed. If an hour is available, 4 or 5 scenarios could be discussed.



Suggested Uses

Using scenarios can be used to assess both awareness and accurate knowledge of support services and access to support from family or friends. The activity is also useful in a peer education context where young people learn by listening to their peers' experiences.



Complementary Tools

The *What if...? Scenarios* activity can be combined with the *My Support Map* activity to form a workshop on support services for young people.



Implementation Tips

- If doing this activity for the first time or with a new group, consider asking the group to offer scenarios they have experienced or scenarios they worry about and would like to discuss, e.g. being bullied.

- Scenarios can also be generated in a small group e.g. with the program coordinator and 1-2 long term group members. A list of scenarios developed by two young people from a young mothers' program is included in this guide (see *Example*).
- When discussing scenarios, be aware that talking about negative events and experiences can dampen spirits within a group. Try to focus discussions on solutions and support services and organisations available to ensure the activity is a positive experience for participants.
- Facilitators should make sure they have one or more pre-prepared strategies or 'solutions' for every scenario in case the group has no suggestions. Otherwise young people can finish the activity feeling worried about not knowing what to do in certain scenarios.
- Scenarios should be reviewed periodically with young people to check they remain relevant. Add or delete scenarios to suit changing circumstances and group members.
- To increase youth engagement, consider asking participants to role-play scenarios e.g. responding to a bully or an abusive partner.



Links

[My Support Map](#)

[What if...? Scenarios](#)



The My-Peer Toolkit [1.0] was developed by [Western Australian Centre for Health Promotion Research](#) and is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivative Works 2.5 Australia License](#). It can be accessed at www.mypeer.org.au.



EXAMPLE

List of scenarios generated by young women from a young mothers' group to explore social and support networks available to young mothers.

1. Your baby is crying in the middle of the night. Who would you contact in this situation?
2. If you have to bring one of your children to hospital, who would you ask to mind your other children?
3. Your child is ill but you don't know the cause. Who can you call considering your finances are tight?
4. Your boyfriend is not helping out with your new-born. For example, staying out late after work. Who do you turn to discuss this problem? Are there any organisations that could help/support?
5. If you and your partner have a difference in opinion considering parenting your children, who would you turn to?
6. You are working but you didn't do your tax returns. Where would you go to get advice?
7. You have a friend who you suspect has a dependency issue (alcohol/drugs). Where can she go to get help?
8. Centrelink has sent you a letter saying you owe them money? Who do you turn to?
9. Your old friends are busy ever since you had your baby and you don't fit into the local play group. It's a day when there is no young mothers' group. Who can you go to for support?
10. You are celebrating your 21st. Who do you share your celebrations with?
11. Your baby has just said "Ma Ma" for the first time. Who do you tell?