

Supporting each other

Key Stage 4 (14-16 years)

This fun task is linked to elements of the National Curriculum:

English, ICT, Science, Drama, and Personal Social Health Education (PSD and PSE).

Learning outcomes

- Learn the facts about cancer and how Macmillan helps people living with cancer
- Consider and develop empathy with people who have cancer
- Working co-operatively with others

Preparing for the activity

You will need

- Printouts of resource sheet 1 *What is cancer? The facts* from the secondary school *Cancertalk* booklet or order a free hard copy.
- The *Cancertalk* video *Living with cancer* for secondary schools (order your free copy on our Class Action website).

What to do

Hand out resource sheet 1 *What is cancer? The facts*. Read through the text together. Ask the students to underline any new facts about cancer they've learnt.

Optional: Print out the story of Adam, 'I have cancer', or others from our real experiences section or from the Why Bother? 'real-life zone'. Ask students to spend two minutes writing down anything they have learnt about the impact of cancer. Discuss their lists.

Brainstorm human needs with the students (e.g. food, love, information, health, etc.) and group the needs into categories:

- basic physical needs (e.g. food)
- emotional needs (e.g. companionship)
- intellectual needs (e.g. information)
- spiritual needs (e.g. religion).

Ask the students to prioritise the needs and point out that if one of the basic human needs (e.g. health) is not fulfilled, a person's other needs and priorities change.

Watch Tom's story, 'People say I'm famous' (scene two) on the *Living with cancer* video, and discuss what they have learnt from his experience. Some of the things to think about while watching the video are:

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- How did Tom's mum help them both feel better when Tom was feeling ill?
- How did some of Tom's school friends react to him coming back to school?
- What did Tom's sisters do in school to make everyone understand what was happening to Tom?
- How did Tom want to be treated?

After watching the video, talk about answers to these questions. If you have time, ask a student to read Adam's story, 'I have cancer', in the real experiences section or watch Lizzi Cross' 'The World is your Oyster' (scene 1), or read Louise's story, on resource sheet 8 of the *Cancertalk* booklet, and discuss similar questions to the story (You can also look for other real-life stories on the *Why Bother?* website). Ask the students to compare these stories to Tom's, as well as their own needs.

Ask the students to work in groups and discuss what help they could give someone of their own age diagnosed with cancer. Examples could include befriending, mentoring, visiting them at hospital or at home, health awareness and fundraising events, or getting advice from health professionals or cancer charities such as Macmillan.

Drama activity

Students should form groups of three or four. Tell them to consider how family members and friends feel about the news that someone close to them has cancer. Then they should assign a part to each of the three or four individuals in the group. Students should plan, and then act out the reactions of the three or four family members and/or friends, focusing on comments, emotion, and facial and bodily expression.

Event idea

This activity can be done while taking part in one of Macmillan Cancer Relief's events, such as *Cancertalk* Week 23-27 January 2006, The Macmillan Miles Challenge 21-28 May 2006 or your own health promotion or fundraising event for Macmillan.