

Guidelines for Gender Equality



Throughout the year 2018 the members of Saga Finland and its partners have carried out several youth activities related to the topics of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Based on the practical knowledge gained from organizing and implementing these activities as well as the analysis of the participants' feedback, we would like to suggest the following guidelines for the organizations and youth workers who would like to implement more gender inclusive approach in their work.

At the stage of planning and preparing the youth activity, it may be beneficial to:

- In the application form for the participants, when asking about gender, provide a type-in graph (not Male or Female tick-in option), so it is not a limited choice
- In the same application form ask the participants if they have any cultural/gender reservations/requirements (that might affect sleeping arrangements, bathroom arrangements, activities they cannot participate in etc.). Make sure these requests can be met in practice. *For example: several Muslim girls in one of our projects couldn't live in mixed rooms. So it has been organized that one of the rooms is exclusively female.*
- Have personal conversations with the participants with special requests before the start of activities in order to create truly safe and comfortable environment
- Ensure gender balance at the stage of selection of the participants (as much as possible)

We believe it's important that the leaders/organizers of the youth activities:

- Represent different genders
- Have basic knowledge and understanding of gender related issues
- Have discussed gender related topics together before the project, so everyone is "on the same page". *For example: before doing a big youth seminar about gender equality, we had a several day leaders meeting where we learnt and discussed the topic together*

During the activities it is recommended to:

- Provide basic information about gender inclusion and how it is going to be done in this particular activity at the beginning of the project (including basic principles of respect, no judgement and mutual support)
- Make sure that gender inclusion is mentioned in the common rules for the group so all the participants can agree it is a safe space for everyone

- Request that each participant has not only their name but their gender (and the pronoun they feel comfortable with) on their badge
- Make sure that every activity (including energizers and unplanned talks such as coffee breaks etc) do not perpetuate (even jokingly) any gender or sex related stereotypes.
- Encourage the participants to engage in stereotype-breaking activities (e.g. encouraging boys to do more traditionally “girls’ things” and vice versa)
- Ensure that group division for activities is not based on gender
- When having participants with special gender/cultural needs, make sure you design activities everyone is comfortable with, as well as be ready to change/adapt activity if needed (e.g. participants are uncomfortable being touched, prefer not to discuss certain topics etc.)
- If any gender related tension/problem arises, address it respectfully with a group, make sure that every participants feels comfortable and safe again

When analysing the outcomes of the activity:

- Include questions about gender inclusion in the evaluation form. *For example, several participants shared how specific activities changed their understanding of gender issues and modified their behavior*
- Discuss gender related questions with the partners