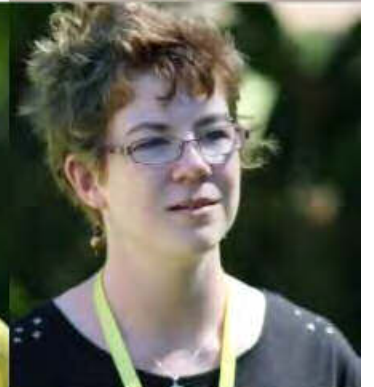
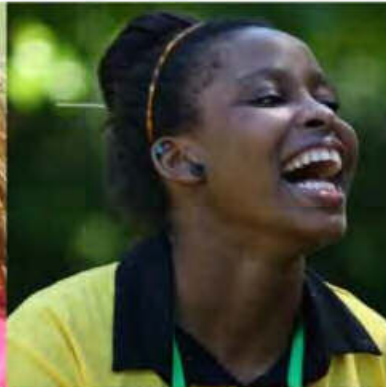




Hope for girls

A resource exploring global justice issues

the girls' brigade international



HOPE FOR GIRLS: AN OVERVIEW

Why hope for girls?

I'm more likely to not be able to read and write *because* I'm a girl.

I'm more likely to have tears of sorrow (not tears of joy) on my wedding day *because* I'm a girl.

I'm more likely not to have a choice about where and when my first sexual experience happens *because* I'm a girl.

I'm more likely to be missing from the face of the earth *because* I'm a girl.

Unfortunately statistics show that these statements are true facts. In our broken world, some girls are presented with many challenges. But there is *hope*.

God has used Girls' Brigade to give hope to many girls across the world by providing life skills, a caring family, and empowering them to understand 'life to the full'. Girls like Dina from Tanzania, the winner of the GB International photo competition 2014. Girls' Brigade has helped Dina to grow in her faith, gain an education, an income generating business, and a ministry in her own GB company. You can see her photo story on the GB Worldwide website.

Girls' Brigade cares with and for this generation of silenced, oppressed, unloved, unseen, forgotten and under-valued girls and women across the world. Girls' Brigade wants to celebrate the value and potential of girls and women across the world as they're made in God's image. After all, that's what Jesus did.

Hope for girls was created by a group of millennial 18-30s leaders who attended The Gathering 2013 in South Africa. One of the main themes to emerge from The Gathering 2013 was that this generation of millennial leaders are passionate about being advocates for hope and justice.

The *Hope for girls* resource features stories and videos from across the world exposing the injustices that girls face - and empowering GB members to be part of transforming their world in positive ways. *Hope for girls* is based around two principles: education leads to action, action leads to transformation. Our hope is that together we can play our part in making the world a fairer place for everyone.

How do I use *Hope for girls*?

There are six sessions in this resource aimed at young women aged 13 to 18 years old exploring the following themes:

1. Girls in the world today
2. Girls are made in the image of God – injecting value and worth
3. Girls are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' – defying the ideal standard of beauty
4. Girls can learn and go to school – benefits of education
5. Girls can make healthy relationship choices – importance of maintaining healthy relationships
6. Girls can change the world – being a transforming advocate.

Every session contains different elements such as interactive activities, exploration of the Bible, creative prayer ideas and further ideas to develop the theme. Each session includes a Be The Change activity to inspire and motivate the young people to choose to live differently and play their part in ending injustice.

Here are some helpful hints on how to use the resource effectively:

- Each session is around one hour in length – you can pick and choose the activities that are most relevant to your group. It also includes ideas which you can use if you have additional time
- Please be aware that this session deals with sensitive topics – some girls may have been directly affected by these issues. Please ensure that you have other leaders present who are gifted in pastoral care and able to offer support if it's needed
- Some sessions contain optional activities that require downloading videos or PPTs. These can all be found at www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

Special thanks to The Gathering 2013 participants including Happiness Asheazi, Naomi Begg, Porsha de Cleene, Christine MacFarlane, Alison Murray, Claire Rush and Safiya de Silva who contributed to this resource.

SESSION #1: GIRLS IN THE WORLD TODAY

This session explores the opportunities and challenges of being a girl in the 21st century as well as the concepts of fairness and justice.

SETTING THE SCENE: That's not fair!

You'll need: Luxurious snacks like chocolate or fruit and basic snacks like biscuits.

Here's a fun but poignant activity to help set the scene and introduce the concept of fairness. As the group comes into the room, tell people at random to go to the left or right side of the room. Set up the left side of the room with nice snacks like chocolate or fruit and a cosy place to sit. On the right side, don't put any chairs out so they have to sit on the floor and either provide no snacks or just basic biscuits. Give the group some free time to chat – enough time for them to understand that the two groups are being treated differently.

Ask: How does it make them feel? Are they being treated unfairly? What is fairness?

Explain: We live in a world which treats people unfairly. In particular, girls are often treated differently from boys. Over the next few weeks, we're going to explore this more.

ENGAGE: Being a girl

(10 mins)

You'll need: Marker pens and two large pieces of paper per group.

Divide the group into small groups of four or five people and ask them to draw an outline of a girl on each piece of paper. Give the groups five minutes to discuss and write down the opportunities and challenges of being a girl in 2014. After group discussion, invite them to share their thoughts with the wider group and ensure that you draw out that there are both challenges and opportunities of being born female.

REFLECT: Because I'm a girl

(10 mins)

You'll need: To write out or print out statistics.

Print or write out the statistics below on individual pieces of paper and place them on the floor or wall in your room. Invite the group to spend some time wandering around and looking at them. After a few minutes, ask them to stand at the statistic which they feel most shocked about. Statistics are from Plan.

- 65 million girls are missing from classrooms across the world.
- Internationally, one in five girls of lower secondary school age isn't attending school.
- Every three seconds, another girl is forced to marry someone she doesn't want to.
- 10 million girls are coerced into marriage each year.
- 150 million girls across the world have experienced rape or other forms of sexual violence before they reach 18 years old.
- Around 113 to 200 million girls and women are simply missing. Girls and women are at a greater risk of suffering gender-based violence such as honour killings and being trafficked.

Explain the fact that girls being treated differently from boys simply because of their gender isn't fair. It's an injustice and it's not what God intended. Let's see what God says.

DISCUSS: What does God say?

(15 mins)

You'll need: Bibles and questions.

Divide the group into two. Get one group to read Luke Ch.7:36-50 (Jesus anointed by a woman who lived a sinful life) and the other group to read John Ch.4:4-42 (Jesus talks with a Samaritan woman at the well).

Cont...

SESSION #1: GIRLS IN THE WORLD TODAY

DISCUSS: What does God say?

...Cont.

Get both groups to answer the following questions:

- How does Jesus treat the woman? What is unusual about what happens?
- What is the significance of the main character in both these stories being a woman?
- How would the stories be different if they were about men?
- Why do you think Jesus behaves in this unconventional way?
- Is there anything that you find personally challenging about the story?

Explain: God believes women and men have equal value and worth. Our hope is that women and men will be equally valued in words and actions in our present culture.

GB TRANSFORMATION STORIES: Dina

(10 mins)

You'll need: PowerPoint of Dina's GB transformation story and a data projector and laptop. You can download the PPT at www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

Dina from Tanzania was the GB International competition winner in 2014. Girls' Brigade has helped Dina to grow in her faith, gain an education, an income generating business, and a ministry in her own GB company. Share Dina's story with your group.

Give them time to reflect on the following questions:

- What were the challenges that Dina faced?
- How did God use Girls' Brigade to transform her life?
- What has been the impact of GB on my life?

Spend some time thanking God for how GB is transforming lives across the world – pray together.

BE THE CHANGE: Create the world that you want to see for girls (15 mins)

You'll need: Paper and a variety of different craft materials like pens, crayons, chalk and paint.

What do you think the world would look like if everyone equally valued girls and boys like God intended? Give the group some time to reflect on this. Invite them to create the world that they want to see for girls as a piece of art – a drawing, painting or even collage. You could display them in your church and invite others to look and pray over them. Don't forget to send us a photo so we can upload it onto our website or social media pages - home@gbworldwide.org

DO LATER: How has the world changed for girls?

Get the group to think about positive activities that girls in your country couldn't do 100 years ago. Then organise a trip with your group to do it – let's celebrate that the world can change for girls!

SESSION #2: GIRLS ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

This session explores how God made us all in His image and this bestows us with equal worth and value.

SETTING THE SCENE: How much is it worth?

You'll need: Various objects or photos of objects of varying value, a photo of a boy or girls, pens and paper.

Here's a fun but poignant activity to help set the scene and introduce the concept of value and worth. Gather a number of different objects or photos of objects together and split the group into small teams. Give them each paper and pen. Show each group an object and ask them to write down how much they think it's worth. You can throw some tricky ones in – perhaps an object which looks old but is valued highly. The closest team to the actual monetary value of the item gets the point. At the end, show the teams a photo of a boy and a photo of a girl. Ask 'how much are they worth?'

Explain that in God's eyes, women and men have equal value. However, we still live in a world which can treat women with less respect and less worth than men.

ENGAGE: Spot the difference

(10 mins)

You'll need: Marker pens and two large pieces of paper per group.

Split the group into smaller groups of four or five people and ask them to draw an outline of a girl on one piece of paper and an outline of a boy on the other. Give the groups five minutes to discuss and write down how boys and girls are perhaps treated differently in your society and countries around the world. For example, they may be paid different for the same job, boys may be more likely to go to school etc. After group discussion, invite them to share their thoughts with the wider group.

DISCUSS: What does God say?

(10 mins)

You'll need: Bibles and questions.

In small groups, ask the young people to define the term 'discrimination'. Explain that discrimination is a word used to describe when a person or group of people are treated differently and unfairly without a justified reason. When a person is treated differently because of their sex, this is called gender discrimination.

Let's explore what the Bible says about discrimination. Read Galatians Ch.3: 25-28 (*The Message*): *'But now you have arrived at your destination: By faith in Christ you are in direct relationship with God. Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe—Christ's life, the fulfilment of God's original promise. In Christ's family there can be no division into Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female. Among us you are all equal. That is, we are all in a common relationship with Jesus Christ. Also, since you are Christ's family, then you are Abraham's famous "descendant," heirs according to the covenant promises.'*

Explain that Paul in his letter to the Galatians clearly states that we all have equal value and worth in God's family. Through Jesus' death, we all can have a relationship with God. But we also have a responsibility to treat others equally.

REFLECT: Jobs for girls?

(15 mins)

You'll need: Download of the video of GB Cayman Island's Because I am a Girl challenge and a data projector and laptop. You can download the video at www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

If you have the equipment, enable your group to watch GB Cayman Islands' Because I Am A Girl challenge video which reveals some of the challenges girls face in the workplace. If you don't have the equipment, you can use the questions on the next page.

Cont...

SESSION #2: GIRLS ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

REFLECT: Jobs for girls?

...Cont.

Explain that gender discrimination is when someone is treated differently because of their gender. One of the areas in which gender discrimination can happen is the workplace.

In the same small groups from the previous activity, give each group a set of the following questions to think and reflect on:

- Do you think that there are certain jobs only men and women can do? Why? Why not?
- Do you think women and men should be paid the same if they're doing the same job? Why? Why not?
- Do you think women should serve in the frontline of military combat? Why? Why not?
- Do you think women should be pastors and ministers? Why? Why not?
- What other ways can men and women be treated unfairly in the workplace?

BE THE CHANGE: Using art to change your world

(20 mins)

You'll need: Paper and a variety of different craft materials like pens, crayons, chalk and paint.

Discrimination was not part of God's plan for His world. He loves and values us equally - regardless of gender, race, ability or what we look like. Let's help educate others to respect each other better. Invite the group to create a piece of art which encourages people to stamp out discrimination and treat each other with equal respect. Encourage the girls to see this as a way of educating others and transforming their world. Ask them to incorporate the Bible verse Galatians Ch.3:28 into their piece of art.

You may need to give them some extra time for this. Ensure their art is displayed in a prominent place for others to see or perhaps arrange a special time when the group presents them to the rest of the GB company. Don't forget to send us a photo so we can upload it onto our website or social media pages - home@gbworldwide.org

CREATIVE PRAYER

(5 mins)

During the session, the group has been learning that everyone has equal worth and deserves to be treated the same. This also means that everyone has an equal voice and a unique contribution to make. Invite everyone to participate in the closing prayer.

Sit the group in a circle and send a piece of paper and pen around. Ask everyone to write one sentence of the prayer each. At the end, read out the whole prayer.

SESSION #3: GIRLS ARE FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

This session explores the difficulty of trying to live up to society's 'ideal beauty' standard and how our identity is rooted in more than what we look like.

SETTING THE SCENE: People with love

You'll need: Photos, sticky tape, and sticky tack/pins.

Invite the group to bring a few photos of people who they think are beautiful on the inside and have made a positive impact in their lives. Encourage them to bring photos of friends and family (rather than celebrities who they don't actually know). As the young women arrive, ask them to share about the good characteristics that these people possess and how they've made a positive impact in their lives.

ENGAGE: B-E-A-U-T-I-F-U-L

(10 mins)

You'll need: Magazines, newspapers, glue, scissors, paper, pens, and crayons.

Split the group into smaller groups of four or five people and ask them to create a collage of women who they think are 'beautiful'. They can use the magazines and newspapers to cut out 'beautiful' women. If this isn't possible, get them to write down and think of examples of people who are 'beautiful'. Allow some time at the end for them to share their collages and their thoughts with the rest of the group. What makes someone beautiful?

Explain that in our society, people are often valued for what they look like on the outside. Today, we're going to explore the difficulty of trying to live up to society's 'ideal beauty' standard and how our identity is rooted in more than what we look like.

REFLECT: Who decides who's beautiful?

(10 mins)

You'll need: True and false signs on wall.

Put a 'true' sign on one wall and put a 'false' sign on the opposite wall. Explain to the group that you're going to read out a number of statements and they must decide if they're true or false by voting with their feet. After each statement, allow some time for discussion and draw out the different ideas.

1. The standard of beauty never changes. It's the same in all cultures and all generations.

False: The standard of beauty is fluid and changes compared to context and culture. For example in Ancient Greece, women who were voluptuous (curvy) and fair skinned were viewed as beautiful as it showed they were wealthy enough to eat good food and not have to work outside in the sun. Today in Western societies, the beauty ideal is to be very thin and tanned.

2. If you live in a society with access to lots of technology, you probably see 2,000 adverts every day.

False: You'll probably unconsciously see at least 3,500 adverts per day. We're literally bombarded by messages trying to sell us a perfect image or lifestyle.

3. Every photo of a woman in advertisements has been digitally altered.

Very often this is true: Nowadays because of the drive for perfection, every photo is altered or digitally enhanced. If you have time, you can share this video from UK comedian Juliette Burton -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xMfm822ITU>. It documents how her image was photoshopped for a magazine cover. If you have internet access, you can search for some digitally altered photo mistakes that look ridiculous – there are lots of them! Just search 'photoshop fails'.

4. Advertising companies exploit our insecurities about what we look like.

Very often this is true: The purpose of advertising companies is to sell a product to us. In order for us to buy a product, they must make us think that we need a product!

Explain that many girls believe that their worth and identity is based solely on what they look like. In fact, it can be very hard to think differently when we're constantly bombarded by this message through the media. How can we be firm in our identity and live in a culture which is actively trying to make us anxious about what we look like?

SESSION #3: GIRLS ARE FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

GB TRANSFORMATION STORIES: Petra

(10 mins)

You'll need: A copy of Resource Sheet A – Petra's story (see p.14) for everyone.

This *Hope for girls* resource is about how we can be the change that we want to see in the world. Transformation starts with us and how we choose to live. Petra, a GB leader in Zambia, has chosen not to judge her worth on the Zambian 'beauty ideal'. Read how she does this in her article 'I am not my hair'.

Spend some time discussing the following questions:

1. What do you think of Petra's example of embracing her individuality?
2. Are there ways that you can refuse to confirm to the unrealistic beauty ideal in your society?
3. What are you going to do this week to transform your culture? Perhaps it's not wearing make-up every day? Not talking negatively about your body? Complimenting someone else on their personality rather than their physical appearance? Refusing to buy a women's magazine? Make a commitment to shape your culture this week in a positive way.

DISCUSS: What does the Bible say?

(15 mins)

You'll need: A copy of Resource Sheet B – Psalm 139 (see p.15) for everyone.

Give each person a copy of Resource Sheet B and invite them to find a quiet space in the room to reflect on Psalm 139 and the following questions.

1. What's the most striking verse for you? Why?
2. What does the Bible teach us about beauty?
3. What does the Bible teach us about identity?

BE THE CHANGE: Reclaiming your identity

(15 mins)

You'll need: Paper and a variety of different craft materials like pens, crayons, chalk and paint.

When girls believe that their worth depends on how well we match up with society's ideal (and unrealistic) standard of beauty, this can lead to negative behaviours such as depression, eating disorders, insecurity and self-harm. In today's society, it's easier to label ourselves negatively. I wonder how often you've thought 'I'm ugly. I'm fat. I'm too skinny. I have spotty skin.

I don't have nice teeth etc.' Today, let's reclaim who we are really are. Show them Resource Sheet C (see p.16).

God says you're blessed, chosen, free, forgiven, delightful, valuable etc. Which part of your identity do you need to reclaim today?

Invite the group to make a beautiful picture or drawing of their word which they can take home with them and put on their wall.



DO LATER:

Low self-esteem can result in a number of unhelpful behaviours – self-harm, eating disorders, cyber bullying etc. If you think it's appropriate, invite trained youth/community workers or health professionals to lead an additional session exploring a specific issue.

SESSION #4: GIRLS CAN LEARN AND GO TO SCHOOL

This session explores the benefits of education and the challenges that some girls must overcome to get the opportunity to go to school. **PLEASE NOTE: We're aware that girls in the GB family have different experiences of this issue. Please amend the session plan accordingly especially if you live in a culture where the challenges facing girls are very real.**

SETTING THE SCENE: School stories

You'll need: Paper and pens.

As the group arrive, ask them to think of funny moments which they've had in school. Invite them to write them down on slips of paper (without their name) and put them in a bowl. Go around the circle and one at a time, instruct each person to read a slip of paper. Ask the group to guess whose funny story belongs to who.

ENGAGE: Education helps

(10 mins)

You'll need: Large paper, pens, and crayons etc.

Split the group into smaller groups of four or five people and ask them to create a diagram explaining the benefits of going to school. What have they learned from going to school or being educated? After a brief group discussion, explain education enables people to gain transferable basic skills, learn how to read, empower themselves to make good choices, opportunities for further learning, a sense of achievement, and enables their social skills.

REFLECT: Tearing down the walls

(15 mins)

You'll need: Large paper and marker pens.

Explain that although education is very important, many children, particularly girls, miss out on the opportunity. Here's some startling facts:

- 66 million girls are not being educated today
- There are 33 million fewer girls than boys in primary school.

Give each group a large piece of paper and marker pens. Invite them to divide the piece of paper into bricks on a wall. Give the group time to discuss what the barriers are that some girls have to overcome before going to school. Invite the group to fill up the bricks with ideas.

Ensure that you have some time at the end to draw together discussions. Here are some of the barriers that girls face:

- **Poverty** – in some poorer communities the cost of school is too much (fees, books, uniforms). Poverty can force families to choose which children to keep out of school. When faced with this impossible choice, girls can often lose out.
- **Attitudes** – some families don't understand the importance of educating girls. Girls can be viewed as home makers while boys' education is perceived to have greater value.
- **Child marriage** – some girls become wives and mothers at a very young age. As this role takes priority, they're unable to go to school.
- **Pregnancy** – childbirth can cause a lot of health complications particularly if a girl is very young.
- **Disasters and emergencies** – when a disaster strikes, girls can spend hours fetching water or wood and this leaves little time for education.
- **Facilities** - many schools in the developing world don't have proper toilet facilities so many girls have to miss school during their period.
- **Threat of violence** – even if families wanted to, and could afford to, send their daughters to school, they won't because of the threat of violence. Schools can be situated a long way from home – girls are at risk of assault when they walk to school. Many are not even safe in school – Boko Haram kidnapped over 200 girls from their boarding school in Nigeria at night. Due to the lack of electricity at night, the terrorists were mistaken for the army.

SESSION #4: GIRLS CAN LEARN AND GO TO SCHOOL

GB TRANSFORMATION STORIES: GB Nigeria

(10 mins)

You'll need: A downloaded copy of GB Nigeria's Because I Am A Girl challenge video and a copy of the Girl Effect video. Download available from www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

Enable your group to watch GB Nigeria's Because I Am A Girl video. It was created by a group of young women from Nigeria as part of The Gathering 2013. The video concentrates on the effect of forced marriage, one of the barriers that many girls face when they want to be educated. Normally once girls are married, they no longer go to school. If your group is not familiar with forced marriage, explain that this is when a parent or family member decides who and when they get married. They don't have a choice.

Watch the video and discuss the following questions in small groups:

1. How would you feel if you were the young woman in the video?
2. Why do you think it's important for girls to be able to go to school?
3. How do you think GB contributes to girls' informal education?

After discussion, play the Girl Effect video which shows the positive benefits for the whole community when girls are educated.

BE THE CHANGE

(15 mins)

Here are two options depending on the culture that you live in...

- (1) If you live in a culture where it's the 'norm' for most girls to go to school

Give the group some time to explore how they could creatively educate the girls in the rest of the group about the challenges that some girls in other cultures must overcome in order to go to school - perhaps in the form of a drama, poem or poster. Encourage them to perform it to inspire other members to be grateful of the benefits of education.

- (2) If you live in a culture where it's common for girls to face barriers to education

Encourage the group to think of practical ideas about how they can promote the benefits of girls' education. Perhaps this is creating posters which could be displayed in a public place like the local library or community hall. Or perhaps they could write a letter to a local government representative urging them to make girls' education a priority as it benefits the whole community. Urge them to take action to transform their community.

You may need to extend this activity to the following week.

CREATIVE PRAYER

(10 mins)

You'll need: A copy of the Chibok Girls creative prayer resource - download available from www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

On 14-15 April 2014, over 200 young women were abducted by terrorist group Boko Haram from a boarding school in Chibok, Nigeria. At the time of this resource's publication, many still remain missing and separated from their families. We know that at least six of the young women are members of GB. GB International has created a creative prayer resource to help GB groups engage and pray for these young women. Let's choose to spread hope and believe in a Heavenly Father who can make all things possible. Spend some time using some of the creative prayer ideas with your GB group.

DO LATER: *Girl Rising*

Host a *Girl Rising* movie night! From Academy Award-nominated director Richard E. Robbins, *Girl Rising* journeys around the globe to witness the strength of the human spirit and the power of education to change the world. Viewers get to know nine unforgettable girls living in the developing world: ordinary girls who confront tremendous challenges and overcome nearly impossible odds to pursue their dreams. You can download the movie for a small donation here at www.girlrising.com

SESSION #5: GIRLS CAN MAKE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP CHOICES

This session explores the importance of building and maintaining healthy relationships. UN statistics demonstrate that over 35% of women worldwide have experienced some form of violence in a relationship.

PLEASE NOTE: Sex is a sensitive topic and our culture, particularly the media, is becoming increasingly sexualised. Young leaders who attended The Gathering 2013 requested that GB takes a more active role in exploring these issues. It's important that we speak positively about sex in committed relationships, moving away from just talking about rules and regulations to exploring why God may have designed marriage as the best context for a sexual relationship.

SETTING THE SCENE: Best friends

You'll need: Pieces of paper per table/group.

Divide the young people into smaller groups of four or five. Give them separate pieces of paper with the following words written on it: funny, thoughtful, selfless, good-looking, patient, loving, generous, sporty, wealthy. Invite the group to discuss which three characteristics are the most important when looking for a friend or boyfriend.

ENGAGE: What do you think?

(10 mins)

You'll need: Agree and disagree signs.

Due to access to the internet, young people across the world are exposed to an increasingly sexualised media culture. This activity gives them space to explore what they really think but also engage with critical thinking and challenge their core beliefs. Place the two signs on separate walls. Read the statements below and invite the young people to vote with their feet. Allow some time for exploring people's thoughts and ideas and to also bring out the complexities of the statements. Don't be afraid to put across a different way of thinking.

- I can do whatever I want in a relationship.
- Love conquers all.
- Love and sex are the same thing.
- Boys think about sex more than girls.
- Having sex is a good way to feel better about yourself.
- I never feel pressured into anything.
- The media plays a huge part in how young people view relationships.
- It's acceptable for your partner to hit you at least once.

DISCUSS: What does God think?

(15 mins)

Here are two ideas to explore the issues of love, sex and relationships with your young people. Please choose the most appropriate activity:

Idea 1: Loving relationships

You'll need: Bibles and/or print outs of 1 Corinthians Ch.13:4-7 (*The Message*) and questions.

In small groups, invite the young people to read 1 Corinthians Ch.13:4-7 and discuss:

1. What's challenging about this passage?
2. Share a moment with the group when you experienced someone loving you like this?
3. We also have to invest in our friendships and relationships. From the passage, what do you find is the most challenging aspect of love? What do you need to work on?

SESSION #5: GIRLS CAN MAKE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP CHOICES

REFLECT: What does God think?

(15 mins)

Idea 2: God loves sex

You'll need: Bibles and/or print outs of the following verses (from *The Message* version) and questions. In small groups, invite the young people to discuss what they learn about sex and relationships from God's word. We've provided some of the most important points to bring out in order to help you.

- 1 Corinthians Ch.6:16-17: God's word demonstrates that sex is much more than just a physical (and often disposable) act which is often portrayed in movies and music videos. In fact, sex as God intended is spiritual and involves two people binding themselves to each other in the deepest form of intimacy.
- Song of Songs Ch.2:3-4: God loves sex. God created sex to be amazing and incredible in a committed relationship.
- 1 Corinthians Ch.7:2-4: God believes that marriage, a committed relationship between two people, is the best context for this type of intimacy. Marriage gives the security for couples to give to each other freely and serve each other selflessly.

GB TRANSFORMATION STORIES: GB St Maarten

(10 mins)

You'll need: A downloaded copy of GB St Maarten's Because I Am A Girl challenge PPT - available from www.gbworldwide.org/projects/hope-for-girls/

Explain that unplanned pregnancy is an issue across the world. Share some facts:

- About 16 million women aged 15-19 give birth each year (this is 11% of all births worldwide)
- Half of all adolescent births occur in seven countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and USA.

St Maarten from GB Caribbean-Americas chose to highlight this issue at The Gathering 2013. Please show the PPT presentation and invite the group to reflect on the following questions:

1. Why do you think there are so many unwanted pregnancies?
2. What would be the challenges and benefits of being a teenage mother?
3. How can we help ourselves and our friends make better choices in our relationships?

BE THE CHANGE

(10 mins)

You'll need: Bible, paper/card and stickers (optional).

Remind everyone that they have a right to feel safe in their relationships and friendships. However they also have a responsibility to love others as Jesus loves us. 1 Corinthians Ch.1:4-7 demonstrates what real love is.

Invite the group to copy the passage onto a piece of paper or card substituting their name for the word 'love'. If you have time, allow them to decorate this sheet. Explain that this piece of paper can be put in a prominent place in their house to remind them to be loving to everyone every day. End in prayer together.

DO LATER:

Invite some people to come and share with the young people. Here are some ideas:

- Organise a relationship educator from a local pregnancy resource centre to come and speak to the youth group
- Organise a trip to your local maternity unit
- Invite a woman who has recently given birth to come and share about her experiences of caring for a child.

SESSION #6: GIRLS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

The final session encourages young women to understand that God calls them to use their influence to transform their communities and He equips them to do this.

SETTING THE SCENE: Obstacle race

You'll need: Blindfolds and a simple obstacle course.

Line up the girls in two teams, all but one blindfolded. The first blindfolded girl is to walk through the obstacle course assisted by the seeing team member. The seeing team member stands at the end of the course, calling instructions to help the blindfolded girl navigate the course. Once she reaches the end of the course she removes her blindfold and calls instructions for the next blindfolded girl.

Ask what would have happened if the girls who could see (who weren't blindfolded) decided that she was not going to help direct her partner through the course? If this was so, most likely some of the girls would have stayed where they were - not venturing out, some of the girls would have stumbled upon an obstacle unsuccessfully while trying to make it on their own, and only a couple would be courageous enough and lucky to manage to navigate the course by themselves despite their disadvantage of being blindfolded. The girl without a blindfold was working on behalf of the blindfolded girl to ensure her safety during the course.

Explain that in a similar way there are people within our countries who endeavour to create a safer (whether that be physically, mentally or spiritually) environment for those challenged. In fact in order to create a fairer society, we all need to play our part, work together, and care about one another.

REFLECT: Transforming advocates

(10 mins)

You'll need: Photos of world-changers and influencers.

Over the past few weeks, we've explored unjust issues which affect girls in your society and/or across the world. Some of these issues are vast and sometimes we feel that we can't do anything to change the status quo. That's not true. We all have influence and the power to transform our world. God call us to be transforming advocates – people who inject His light and hope into dark situations.

Ask your group if they can think of people who have stood up against injustice. Give them five minutes in small groups to make a list. Encourage them to think of people who have also made a difference in their local community.

Allow some time for discussion. You can share some photos of world-changers such as:

- Malala Yousafzai – activist and educationalist
- Julia Immonen – CEO of Sport for Freedom and campaigner against human trafficking
- Margaret Lyttle – founder of Girls' Brigade in 1893
- Nelson Mandela – peace and reconciliation activist and former President of South Africa.

DISCUSS: What does God think?

(15 mins)

You'll need: Bibles.

Esther is a fantastic example of a young woman who despite being in a difficult situation found courage to speak God's truth and light into a dark situation. Give a quick overview of the book of Esther. Raised by her cousin Mordecai, Esther was a Jew who married King Xerxes. Mordecai was an official who worked at the court of the King. Hamman disliked Mordecai and plotted against him by tricking the king to decree the death of all Jews. Mordecai went to Queen Esther to see if she could persuade the king to save her own race from genocide, a massive injustice. Used to being valued for being silent and passive, Esther initially refused to help - feeling fearful for her own life. However she did find her voice and, using her intelligence and courage, Esther helped to save a nation. God had really placed her in the king's court 'for such a time as this'. Read Esther Chapter 4 and discuss: Cont...

SESSION #6: GIRLS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

DISCUSS: What does God think?

...Cont.

- How do you think Esther must have felt when she approached the king?
- What are the injustices that surround you in your local community?
- Where do you think God has placed you 'for such a time as this'?

ENGAGE: Change starts with us

(10 mins)

You'll need: A copy of the dice in Resource Sheet D (see p.17).

Print out the dice on Resource Sheet D which has different conversation starters on it. Sitting in a circle the dice is rolled between each young woman. When an individual receives the dice, she reads out what conversation starter it lands on and makes an 'I' statement. For example, if it lands on 'Who am I a role model for?', the young woman says 'I am a role model for...'. This activity encourages young women to think that transformation starts with us and the choices we make in our daily lives – how we choose to treat others, how we choose to spend our money, and how we choose to use our words.

BE THE CHANGE

(25 mins)

You'll need: A map of your local area, and a map of the world.

This activity is intended to help your GB group develop its own advocacy and justice project. You can spend as long as you like on this activity. The aim is to encourage the young people to work together and use everyone's giftings and ideas to work together for positive change. This can be done in two ways...

THINK LOCAL!

Get a map of your local community or, even better, spend an hour walking around your local community (if this is safe and appropriate). Spend some time praying and asking God to uncover the injustices in the area. Is there a lot of poverty? Is there poor educational facilities? Is there a lot of rubbish and graffiti? Let the group decide on one issue which they want to help change and enable them to work towards how they can be part of the solution. For example, if they're concerned about poverty in the area, they could help organise for food to be dropped at a local food bank. Encourage them to be as creative as possible. Also challenge yourself and step back from directing the group - assuming a more mentoring role.

THINK GLOBAL!

We're all part of the worldwide family of Girls' Brigade. This *Hope for girls* resource demonstrates that girls inside and outside the GB family are affected by injustice. All of us are called by God to help transform our world and make it a fairer place. Invite the group to reflect on the last four session titles – which issue are they most passionate about changing? After they've made their decision, give them time to:

- Do some research on this issue and share it with the group
- Explore ideas which they could do to raise awareness about it – concert, fundraising, exhibition, poster, play, song etc.
- Make one idea happen.

After all, education leads to action and action leads to transformation.

Let's continue to be part of God's story of transformation on earth.



RESOURCE SHEET A: Petra's Story

I am not my hair

In July 2012 I decided to cut my hair and go back to my natural roots. It was such an exciting experience but I clearly had no idea what I had signed up for.

Over the past year I have gone forward and backwards about what to do with my hair. It's so hard to maintain a natural look because it is not as commercially acceptable as 'the other looks'.

When I get comments like 'when are you fixing your hair?' or 'you need to do something about that hair' I wonder is this not enough? Is the natural me not beautiful enough? Is there anything wrong with maintaining the African Zambian kinky hair I was born with? My hair is as it is! My looks are as they are because this is me - truly Zambian.

Perhaps why it's difficult to maintain a natural look is because every day we're put under pressure to look a certain way. You're not 'light enough', your hair isn't 'straight enough' such that at the end of it all you're forced to look a certain way to fit into society.

For example, all the shampoo and hair product commercials that I have seen display girls with straight hair, even cosmetics. There is a certain kind of girl that is portrayed and millions of young girls grow up believing that is how a beautiful girl should look like. Sometimes, even in families, you hear relatives describe babies with lighter skin and 'better' hair as beautiful. What about the dark baby? Is she not beautiful?

From an early age, young girls develop a complex about their looks. At school the girls with treated hair tend to make fun of girls with natural hair. What is wrong with us as a people?

Our minds have been so colonised that we have neglected our true identity in pursuit of other people's idea of beauty.

I say: stay true to yourself, you are beautiful as you are. Don't do something because it is 'socially acceptable'. While accepting you are part of society, live in the freedom of individuality! My African Zambian natural kinky hair is my crown and I embrace it with no apologies!

Petra is a GB leader in Zambia. She attended The Gathering 2013.

RESOURCE SHEET B: Psalm 139

139 ¹⁻⁶ God, investigate my life;
get all the facts firsthand.
I'm an open book to you;
even from a distance, you know what I'm thinking.
You know when I leave and when I get back;
I'm never out of your sight.
You know everything I'm going to say
before I start the first sentence.
I look behind me and you're there,
then up ahead and you're there, too—
your reassuring presence, coming and going.
This is too much, too wonderful—
I can't take it all in!

⁷⁻¹² Is there anyplace I can go to avoid your Spirit?
to be out of your sight?
If I climb to the sky, you're there!
If I go underground, you're there!
If I flew on morning's wings
to the far western horizon,
You'd find me in a minute—
you're already there waiting!

Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark!
At night I'm immersed in the light!"

It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you;
night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you.

¹³⁻¹⁶ Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;
you formed me in my mother's womb.

I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking!
Body and soul, I am marvelously made!
I worship in adoration—what a creation!

You know me inside and out,
you know every bone in my body;
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,
how I was sculpted from nothing into something.

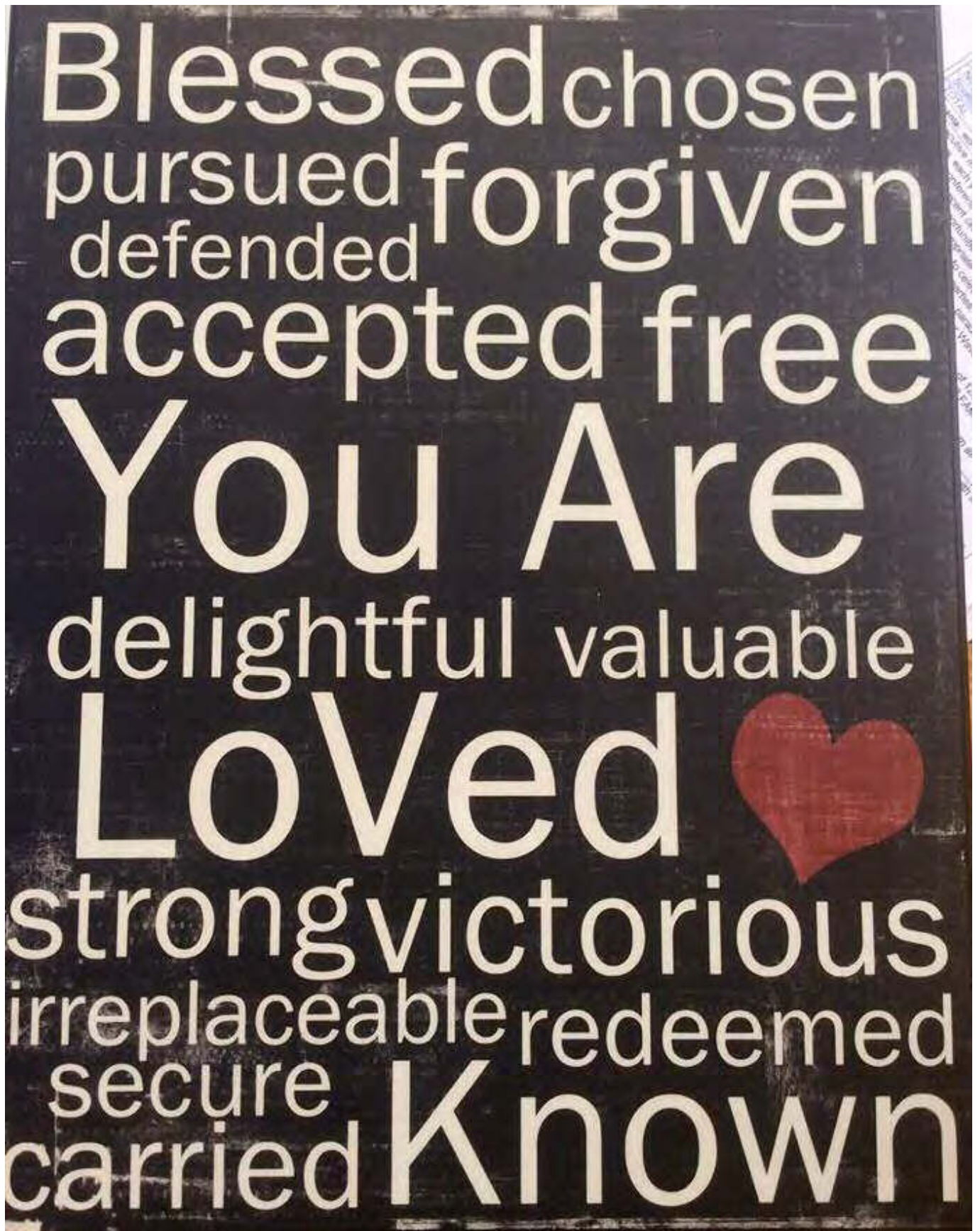
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;
all the stages of my life were spread out before you,
The days of my life all prepared
before I'd even lived one day.

¹⁷⁻²² Your thoughts—how rare, how beautiful!
God, I'll never comprehend them!

I couldn't even begin to count them—
any more than I could count the sand of the sea.
Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you!



RESOURCE SHEET C: Reclaim your identity



RESOURCE SHEET D: Change starts with us

Who am I a role model for?

How can I increase my knowledge on global justice issues?

What are the skills that God has given me?

What global justice issue am I passionate about?

How can I choose to treat people better this week?

How can I be more generous this week?