

SOS Children in the USA

Time required

About 80 minutes

About the lesson

An introduction to social problems in the developed world and the work of SOS in the USA.

Resources

- List of countries with SOS Children's Villages (provided)
- Large world map and appropriate markers
- Slideshow of images (provided)
- 'What do you know about foster care in the USA' quiz (provided - enough copies for each group)
- Children's Rights Flashcards (provided - enough copies for each group)

Learning objectives

- To learn that it is not only developing countries that struggle to look after their children and young people
- To learn about social problems in the USA (and other developed countries)
- To learn about the work of SOS Children's Villages in the USA

Links to National Curriculum subjects

- Geography
- Citizenship
- English

Sources:

www.soschildrensvillages.org/
www.unicef.org/
www.teenshelter.org/
www.policyalmanac.org/

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Lesson plan - Key Stage 4

Introduction to the work of SOS Children's Villages

Introduce the work of SOS Children's Villages by saying that it is the world's largest orphan charity, currently caring for over 70,000 orphaned and abandoned children in 123 countries. Each village has around 10 houses in which SOS mothers care for 7-10 children each. Most villages also have community outreach projects appropriate to the country they are in, helping to support many more children and families.

25 mins

Divide pupils into pairs, and give 2 minutes to list as many countries as they can that might have children's villages on a piece of paper. Display a large laminated world map, and ask each pair to mark on it one of the countries they have suggested.

Variation: Use a Smartboard to display and mark the world map.

Show slideshow of images of the work SOS Children's Villages do worldwide, which includes photographs of the Villages in the USA.

Variation: Show the slideshow of images of the work SOS Children's Villages do worldwide, which includes photographs of the villages in the USA. Ask pupils to guess which country is being shown in the photograph, before clicking on them to check their answers.

Discussion

Ask pupils about their reaction to this, and if they have any suggestions as to why children's villages might be necessary in the USA.

10 mins

A few ideas:

- Teenage pregnancy - providing homes for pregnant and parenting teenagers
- Alcoholism and drug dependency - some parents cannot look after their children due to addictions. Children are given homes while parents receive counselling and rehabilitation
- Easing the transition for young people leaving care, as preparation for independent living.
- Mental illness: some parents are unable to look after their children because of mental health problems.

Quiz

Give copies of the quiz 'What do you know about foster care in the USA' to pairs or groups of pupils, and give 10 minutes to complete. Share and discuss answers.

20 mins

Answers: 1.c) 500 000; 2.b) 6; 3.b) 40%; 4.c) 46% (the national average is a) 12%); 5. b) 25% (the national average is a) 3%); 6.c) 84% (the national average is a) 33%)

Summary of SOS Children's work in the USA

Explain that there are 3 SOS Children's Villages in America, 1 in Florida, and 2 in Illinois. These care for children who would otherwise be put in the foster care system, and provide them with homes, SOS mothers and families. Siblings are always kept together, and there is support for the children's education and mental health. Older teens are taught how to live independently, and young mothers are given help raising their child.

5 mins



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Group Activity

Divide pupils into groups of approximately four, and give each group a set of 'Children's Rights Flashcards'. Explain that this is a selection of rights rather than a comprehensive list. Ask them to select ten rights that SOS Children's Villages focus on the most. Ask groups to report back to the class giving explanations for their answers 20 mins

Extension ideas

- Pupils debate the issue of UK SOS Children's Villages - do we need SOS villages in the U.K, and why/why not? Look at the quiz again, can you find corresponding stats for the UK?