



Dignity Day

Handbook for high schools/junior high schools

This handbook has been produced to give you as school coordinator a brief introduction into Global Dignity Day and your responsibilities as school coordinator. The handbook and appendices and the website www.globaldignity.org contain all the tools and information required to implement a Dignity Day event successfully at your school.

Definition of terms:

Main facilitator: The Global Dignity representative who leads the activities in plenary and serves as Master of Ceremony. Can also serve as a facilitator for a class/group.

Facilitators: The volunteers who lead the sessions in the classrooms

School coordinator: Responsible for the practical aspects of implementing a Dignity Day event at the school.

Global Dignity Country/City Chair: Overall responsibility for planning and facilitating the observance of GDD in their respective country/city.

The handbook provides:

- a description of how a Dignity Day is organised, including distribution of roles and responsibility;
- a timetable and implementation plan for the school coordinator;
- Teaching Tools – how to perform a Dignity Day step by step.

This handbook is an important tool for the planning and implementation of a Dignity Day event. As the event is a collaborative endeavour, its quality is dependent on all parties following the stipulated plan for preparation, implementation and follow-up.

Good luck with your school's Global Dignity Day event!

Dignity Day

A Dignity Day event is a two-hour course and consists of three parts. For the event to be a success it is essential that the school has prepared the students for the day itself, given the teachers the information and motivation they need to do their part, and prepared the facilitators for the job they will do. Schools are advised to follow the stipulated course structure, both in terms of content and timing, as the various components are closely linked and build on one another.

The event is intended for students in high school or junior high school (+/- 16 years old). For the classroom sessions, Global Dignity recommends a group size of about 20-30 students. In small classes of only 12-15 students we recommend that schools consider whether to combine classes. The reason for this is that the classroom session consists of group exercises and discussions between the groups in the class. A small class of 12-15 students will not achieve the same dynamic in its group exercises and discussions as a larger class will. When putting small classes together, it is important to ensure that the groups will function together well and that the students to some extent know and feel secure with each other. It is also an advantage if as many classes as possible take part (though no more than 25 classes) – to ensure sufficient contrast between the classroom and plenary sessions.

Global Dignity Day

Since 2008, Global Dignity Day has been conducted in more than 50 countries on all continents. More than 300 000 students have experienced a Dignity Day. Global Dignity Day takes place the 3rd Wednesday of October each year. In addition to having a great experience at the individual schools, it gives an additional value to be aware that thousands of youth are experiencing the same thing all over the world at that very same day.

Roles and responsibilities

The implementation of a Dignity Day event requires good cooperation between the school, Global Dignity Country Chair, a county leader (if such exists) and the local community. The division of roles and responsibilities is described below.

The school's role and responsibilities

Head of the school

- Has overall responsibility for the observance of Global Dignity Day at the school and ensures that the school is fully committed to the Dignity Day event.
- Puts together a working group for the Dignity Day event, involves the student council in planning activities and appoints a school coordinator from among the school staff, who will lead preparatory activities at the school (the working group).
- Ensures that Dignity Day ties in with the school curriculum and activity plan and that the students learn about the concept of dignity before and after Dignity Day.
- Opens and closes the plenary sessions on the day itself.

School coordinator

- Has responsibility for the practical aspects of implementing a Dignity Day event at the school and heads the working group.
 - o Provides information to and enlists the involvement of the teachers concerned.
 - o Selects and prepares the student who will tell a story of dignity in the first plenary session
 - o Organises all necessary tasks and equipment for implementation of the event (e.g. technical equipment for the plenary room, division of students into groups, writing paper, envelopes, writing materials, coffee and refreshments for the facilitators).
 - o Carries out follow-up activities (at a minimum a plan for opening of the letters students have written to themselves) and ensures that students who need special follow-up receive it.
 - o Ensures that students, teachers and the school administration take part in the evaluation of the event.
- Coordinates activities with the county leader/Global Dignity Country Chair.
 - o Provides the county leader with names of individuals whom the school would like to have as head facilitator and other facilitators.
- Coordinates with the facilitators.

- Time when the event is to be held, meeting time and place, information about the school, division of classes into groups.
- Short debriefing/evaluation of the day's event after it has been concluded.

Teachers

- Ensure that the students are prepared for Global Dignity Day in advance of the event.
- Meet the voluntary facilitators on the morning of the Dignity Day event.
- Are present and participate actively in the discussions in the classrooms, together with the facilitators, and have responsibility for the following:
 - Dividing the students into groups;
 - Making notes on the blackboard;
 - Following up students during group exercises;
 - Helping to select the students who are to tell their stories in the second plenary session.
- Collect and store the letters that the students have written to themselves.
- Carry out relevant follow-up activities.

Student representatives/student council

- Participate in planning the Dignity Day event.
 - Coordinate with Operation other relevant humanitarian projects/events.
 - Provide input on how to prepare for the Dignity Day event.
- Provide input on how to follow up the event once it has been held.

Timetable and implementation plan for the school coordinator

Date	Tasks	Notes
30 April	Enter the Dignity Day event into the school's activity plan (with preparatory, implementation and follow-up activities).	
30 April	Establish a working group for the Dignity Day event at the school.	The school itself is free to choose the members of the group, which may include the school coordinator and representatives of the school administration and student council, school nurses, milieu therapists, and guidance counsellors.
7-11 May	20-minute introductory talks with the county leader.	The county leader and school coordinator review the school's plans for implementation, recruitment of facilitators and involvement of students in the project, as well as further activities.
25 May	Deadline for holding the first planning meeting of the school's working group.	Agenda: task distribution, proposed facilitators/main facilitator.
25 May	Provide important information to the county leader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposed main facilitator and 	

	facilitators; - time when the event is to be held; - final number of classes/mentors; - additional practical information about the school.	
1 September	Deadline for informing the teachers involved about their responsibilities and tasks in connection with the Dignity Day event.	See template for information circular (appendix).
3-21 September	Participate in the county-wide seminar for school coordinators and student council representatives.	
28 September	Ensure that all participating classes/students are given the proper educational preparations for the event.	See appendix for templates.
28 September	Select the student who will tell a story of dignity in the first plenary session.	
1-15 October	Participate in the training meeting for the school's facilitators.	
2 October	Contact all of the school's facilitators and provide information about the meeting time and place, the day's programme, division of classes into groups, and other practical information.	
16 October	Ensure that all practical arrangements for the plenary and classroom sessions are in order.	See appendix for checklist.
3 rd Wednesday in October	Global Dignity Day	See appendix for checklist.
26 October	Deadline for completing an evaluation of the event by the students, teachers and school administration.	Electronic evaluation form is being developed by Global Dignity Norway and will be sent to the school coordinator.

Teaching Tools – How to perform a Dignity Day step by step

Dignity Principles

The first step to take if you want to teach a dignity class is to agree with the following Dignity Principles:

1. Every human being has a right to lead a dignified life.
2. A dignified life means an opportunity to fulfill one's potential, which is based on having a human level of health care, education, income and security.
3. Dignity means having the freedom to make decisions on one's life and to be met with respect for this right.
4. Dignity should be the basic guiding principle for all actions.
5. Ultimately, our own dignity is interdependent with the dignity of others.

Course plan

A Dignity Day event is carried out by voluntary facilitators, who lead the activities in plenary and in the classrooms. But all the preparations, planning and implementation is done in close cooperation with the head of the school and the class teachers. As an alternative a teacher can facilitate the classroom session. Dignity Day events are primarily intended for lower and upper secondary schools. This guide is written for schools, but Dignity Day events may also be held in other contexts.

There are many ways of doing a dignity course but here is a step-by-step guide that works. If you wish do things a bit differently please feel free to do so. Just remember to stay within the spirit of the dignity principles.

The aims of the course:

- Students will learn about the importance of dignity in their own lives and the lives of others.
- Students will learn to express in their own words what dignity means for them and their lives.
- Students will learn about how their own dignity is mutually dependent on the dignity of others.
- Students will name something they are for and what they want to do during the course of the next year to strengthen the dignity of others.

The course consists of three main parts:

1. Introduction in plenary	-The head of the school opens the day - An external facilitator presents Dignity Day and the concept of dignity - Show GD video (optional) - A student at the school tells a dignity story	3 min 10 min 2 min 5 min
2. Discussion in the classrooms	- The facilitator introduces her/himself and the course - The students define dignity in their own words - The students tell each other stories of dignity - The students write a letter to themselves	5 min 15 min 15 min 15 min
3. Stories of dignity in plenary	- Introduction by the external facilitator - Selected students present their stories of dignity to the rest of their peers - Closing remarks by the head of the school	2 min 25 min 3 min

A Dignity Day event is more successful if the school is involved, the teachers are willing to put in some work before and after the event and if the students are prepared for the day itself.

It is an advantage if the students are acquainted in advance with Global Dignity's five Dignity Principles and with the framework for the event. We create an atmosphere of sharing so some students might open up and talk about something that is difficult for them. The school should be prepared for that so that the student is taken well care of. Usually this is not the type of story that should be shared in the plenary session at the end.

Introduction in plenary – 30 minutes

Preparations:

- The hall should be large enough to accommodate all the students, teachers and facilitators for the plenary sessions.
- Technical equipment should be checked to make sure it is in working order (microphones, sound equipment, and video projector if videos are to be used).
- The students should know which group they will be in, and teachers and facilitators should be easily visible, so that everyone can move quickly and efficiently into the classrooms.
- The other facilitators should stand along the sides towards the front of the hall so that the students can see them easily.

Activities:

- The **head of the school** opens the day by welcoming everyone and explaining why the school is holding a Dignity Day event. At this stage it is good idea to refer to relevant school subjects and activities that the school is involved in (anti-bullying programmes, inclusion programmes, solidarity projects, friendship schools etc.)
3 minutes
- **The main facilitator** explains what Dignity Day is, provides the background of the Global Dignity initiative, introduces the other facilitators and talks about the concept of dignity. The points you can include are:
 - Dignity comes from human worth and is intrinsic to all people.
 - We can all enhance our own dignity and that of other people through our choices and actions.
 - In our society we need more reflection and discussion about dignity, as well as greater action.
 - Show 3 min GD video: <http://www.youtube.com/user/GlobalDignityDay#p/u/3/fPHsjsdAR4Q>*10 minutes*
- **One of the students** at the school tells a dignity story that he/she has prepared in advance. This must be well thought out so that it strikes the right chords in terms of the concept of dignity and gives the students associations and inspiration for the discussions in the classrooms.
5 minutes
- **The main facilitator** concludes the session by thanking the student and telling all the students when they should be back in the plenary hall again. The facilitator explains briefly what is going to happen in the classrooms and in the plenary session afterwards.
2 minutes

NB: Allow 10 minutes for students to go from the plenary session to the classrooms.

Discussion in the classrooms – 60 minutes

Preparations:

- All the classrooms should have a blackboard or a flip chart.
- The students need paper and pens.
- There should be a box available for the letters that the students write to go in.
- It is a good idea to have the Dignity Principles hanging up in the classroom, and ideally the teacher should have gone over them with the class before the Dignity Day event. It is also great if the students also have thought of examples from their own experiences or stories known to them that illustrate what dignity means for them.
- The tables in the classrooms should be arranged so that the students can work in groups, with 4-6 students in each group.
- Make sure that you collaborate closely with the teacher – one of you can write notes on the board while the other leads the discussion. Both should go round the classroom when the students are

conducting discussions in groups. Keep in mind that the teacher knows the students well and knows if any of the students require extra supervision because of the personal nature of the discussions or should be given particular consideration.

Activities:

- Start by giving a brief introduction about yourself and why you are there. If you want you can give examples of stories from your own life in which dignity is the focus. Stories that often work well are those that begin with an account of your having failed at something and then go on to describe how you managed, alone or with the help of others, to turn the story around, so that the result was an experience of dignity. It is important to create the right atmosphere, but the narrative still needs to be kept short!

5 minutes

- Ask the students to define dignity in their own words. Let them discuss the term in groups of about 4-6 students for five minutes first before continuing the discussion with the whole class. Write down the various ideas that come up on the board/flip chart. Useful questions/points for discussion:

- o Which of the Dignity Principles apply to the specific ideas that have emerged?

- o Explore some of the most complicated ideas more deeply, so that all the students share the same understanding of them (respect, status, honour)

- o Can our actions enhance the dignity of others? Make it clear how our own dignity is mutually dependent on the dignity of others.

15 minutes

- Ask the students to tell stories about dignity from their own experience and to give examples of incidents where someone was helped and their dignity strengthened. A dignity story can be 'big' (my father saved an entire village from being flooded) or 'small' (I helped an elderly woman with her suitcase up on the buss). Encourage the 'small' stories. Emphasise that the 'small' stories are just as important as the big ones because the world is made up of all the small things. That is how we move the world forward. Let the students discuss this for 10 minutes first in groups of 4-6 students before allowing those who want to do so to share their story with the rest of the class.

- o Make sure that you and the teacher (and any other facilitators present) go around the classroom and listen to the stories being told. A tolerant atmosphere is essential. It takes courage to talk about personal experiences and it is important to provide encouragement and support.

- o Make note of the stories you think could be suitable to be presented in the plenary session at the end.

- o Remember that a dignity story is a positive story about people that get their dignity strengthened.

- o The stories we are looking for serve as positive examples we can learn from.

- o Stories about serious law violations or about physical or sexual abuse are not what we are looking for, especially not for the plenary.

- o Remember also to protect the third party (people that are mentioned in the story).

- o Ask the students who want to tell their stories to the rest of the class. Try to make sure there is enough time for this.

15 minutes

- Ask the students to write down something they are for, and what they are going to do during the course of the next year to increase someone else's dignity (give someone a boost/help someone).

Then have them fold up these letters and write their names on them. Talk to the teacher about the idea of keeping the letters in a box, to be handed out again in a year's time. The letters are being written by the students to themselves to be read a year from now.

Afterwards those who wish to can share their thoughts about what they stand for and what they plan to do during the course of the next year to increase the dignity of others.

15 minutes

- While the students are writing letters to themselves, talk to the students who have told stories of dignity that could be suitable for the plenary session. Discuss this first with the teacher. Ask the students directly to share their stories with the other students at the plenary session. This can be done in three ways: 1) the student tells the story him/herself 2) the facilitator tells the story with the student standing by his/her side 3) The facilitator tells the story but the student remains anonymous. Try to get 2-3 stories from each class (more or fewer depending on how many classes are taking part). A total of about 20 dignity stories tends to work well.

NB: Remember to allow time for going from the classroom to the plenary hall! 10 minutes

Stories of dignity in plenary – 30 minutes

Preparations:

- Technical equipment should be checked to make sure it is in working order.
- The students who have been asked to tell their stories should be ready, lined up in front of the stage.
- The facilitators from the classes stand by the line of students, ready to help them if they get nervous.
- If any other students suddenly wish to tell their stories, it is important that the facilitator or teacher from the respective class checks with the student as to which story he/she wishes to tell and then advice the student to go ahead or not.

Activities:

- The main facilitator who introduced the first plenary session, stands on the stage and explains what is to happen: we are going to hear a variety of stories, some very personal, others of a more general nature, some from the local community and others from countries far away from here.
 - o Emphasise to everyone that it takes a lot of courage to come up on stage.
 - o Ask the audience to applaud for each story.
 - o Then ask the students to come up and take the microphone, one at a time.
 - o The stories stand alone and need no comment. Each student shakes the main facilitator's hand and goes down from the stage. It is important that this is done quickly and efficiently so that there are no breaks between the stories.
 - o If any of the students suffers a mental block, take the microphone and stress again how much courage it takes to stand up there on the stage in front of all the other students, ask for a round of applause and ask the student if he/she is now ready.
 - o If any of the stories becomes too personal or if the student does not manage to bring the story to a close, try to find an appropriate moment, interrupt him/her politely by asking for applause and thank the student warmly for the story.
 - o Main facilitator wraps up the session.

25 minutes

- The head of the school sums up the day and thanks all the students, teachers and facilitators for the discussion.

5 minutes

