



ALONE's CSPE Resource Pack

ALONE

Helping older people in need



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ALONE is an independent charity that works with the 1 in 5 older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. We provide Supportive Housing, Befriending, Community Response and Campaigning services to hundreds of older people every week. We receive no Government funding for our day-to-day activities so we rely solely on the generosity of the public to continue our work. ALONE's services are delivered 365 days a year and we operate with a ratio of 1 staff member to every 18 volunteers.

1 in 5 older people are at risk of homelessness, social isolation, are vulnerable or in crisis.

Supportive Housing

ALONE Housing provides homeless older people with the comfort, safety, and support they need to age in the community. Staff and volunteers work with each resident to ensure they receive the practical and personal supports required to live fulfilling, independent lives as they age. Every ALONE home is age friendly, has its own front door, and is warm and comfortable.



Currently there are over 4,765 older people on the housing list, the real number in need of housing is much higher.

Befriending

ALONE's Befriending Service provides companionship for isolated older people. Loneliness is a serious health risk and a volunteer visit of just one hour a week can make a huge difference. Volunteers can support older people to get out and about, help with day to day tasks, or have a chat over a cup of tea at home. All ALONE volunteers are trained, Garda vetted and supported by experienced mentors.



02. ACTION PROJECT

Community Response

ALONE's Community Response works with older people who are in crisis situations and those who don't know where else to go for help. The main issues we deal with are poor housing, health, elder abuse, poverty and lack of services. We address the emergency situation and work with other agencies to provide long term sustainable solutions for the older people in need.

Calls to our community response service increased by 42% in the last three years.

Campaigns For Change

ALONE's Campaigns are designed to tell the truth about the challenges some older people face. We work directly with older people in need, meaning that all our campaigns represent the real situations facing the older people we work with. As well as highlighting issues, our campaigns are also designed to make real changes at an individual, local and political level.



Rising energy prices and cuts to state services and benefits means more older people are at risk than ever before.

Fundraising

As an independent charity we receive no government funding for the day-to-day running of our services. We rely solely on the generosity of organisations and the general public to support older people most in need. We are transparent and accountable and all of our services are quality approved. We comply with the ICTR Guiding Principles for Fundraising and our annual accounts are independently and externally audited.

Why Choose ALONE For Your Action Project?

ALONE is a rights based organisation and believes in a society where all older people are included as valued and empowered members of their community.

The CSPE course is based around seven core concepts. These include:

- Rights and responsibilities
- Human dignity
- Stewardship
- Development
- Democracy
- Law
- Interdependence

Choosing ALONE for your action project is relevant to all aspects of the course in particular the area of human dignity and rights and responsibilities.



Getting Started

There are six easy to follow steps involved in organising your action project.

Step 1 - Agree the area you want to focus within the CSPE concepts. For example, older people and human dignity.

Step 2 - Decide on the action(s) that the students will undertake.

Step 3 - Plan the action(s). List all the steps involved in each action, and assign responsibilities to individuals or small groups within the class.

Step 4 - Carry out your action project. This may take 1-2 classes, 1 day or a week depending on what you decide to do.

Step 5 - Evaluate your action project. What did you set out to achieve, what were the outcomes, what worked well, what could be done differently or improved on.

Step 6 - Write up a report of your action project and submit to your teacher for review. Maybe, do a presentation to your class or the whole year based on your evaluation.

Action Project: Ideas & Steps Involved

Action 1 - Invite a guest speaker from ALONE to talk to your class about older people and the work of ALONE.

Decide a list of students that will be involved in arranging a visit to the school and who will be responsible for the following:

- Make contact with ALONE to arrange a talk
- Decide on the date, time and duration of the talk

Give the following information to ALONE:

- No. of students in the class
- Teachers name
- Confirm audio-visual equipment
- Duration of the talk
- Decide who will meet the speaker on the day
- Decide who will introduce the speaker to the class
- The presentation is intended to be interactive, so make sure to have questions to ask on the day
- Decide who will show the speaker out at the end of the talk



Action 2 - Organise an awareness campaign in your school about older people's issues - this is ideal following on from a talk as students will be armed with lots of information around the issues affecting older people.

Decide on a list of students that will be involved in arranging the awareness campaign and who will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Decide on theme of the campaign e.g. loneliness, poverty, housing, etc. This could be communicated via art, poetry or information slogans displayed throughout the school.
- Decide on date of the campaign
- Seek permission from teacher/principle for the campaign and to make sure it doesn't clash with any other activities planned.
- Spread the message - send a representative to each class to make them aware of the campaign
- Conduct a survey among fellow students to see what they learned from the campaign
- Present your findings to the class or circulate the results in your school magazine.

Action 3 - Visit a nursing home in your local community to talk to some of the older people living there.

Decide on a list of students that will be involved in arranging the visit and who will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Decide on the purpose of your visit, e.g. to talk to the older people, put on a show - music, singing, dancing, poetry etc.
- Make contact with the local nursing home to arrange a suitable date. Let them know how many students will be coming along and the purpose of your visit.
- Make sure to include your teacher as an adult will need to accompany you.
- Do you want to bring some small gifts for the older people? If so, you could arrange to get support from local businesses. Some gift ideas, include, newspapers/magazines, books, toiletries, slippers etc.
- Write up an account of your experience - what did you learn, did you enjoy the experience, was it difficult, what are the challenges for older people etc.

UK study showed that people over 70 most consistently showed their level of happiness as the highest.

Action 4 - Fundraise for ALONE so that we can continue to support the older people we work with.

Decide on a list of students that will be involved in arranging the fundraising activity and who will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Decide on your fundraising idea. Some of the most ideas include, bake sale, non-uniform day, bucket collection/bag-packing, sponsored walk or run, Christmas fair.
- Decide on the date(s) your fundraising event will take place.
- If you are fundraising within the school you will need to ask permission from your teacher/principal. You will also need to raise awareness in the school.
- Let us know that you are organising a fundraising event and we can provide you with any merchandise you need such as sponsorship cards, posters, buckets, t-shirts.
- If you are organising your event outside the school (supermarket/shopping centre) you will need to seek permission from the store manager.
- ALONE can provide you with a letter of authorisation stating that you have permission to raise funds on our behalf.



03. WHERE THE MONEY GOES

- You may also need to apply for a permit from the Gardai – your teacher can help you arrange this.
- On the day of your event, arrange who will be involved. If fundraising outside of the school, always stay in pairs.
- After the event, make sure the monies are counted and held securely until you can transfer to ALONE.
- We are happy to do a cheque presentation when the funds are presented and provide a thank you letter and certificate to the students.
- We are also happy to include any photos in our newsletter or social media with permission from the school/students.



20% of older people survive on a budget of €186 per week.

22% of older people are affected by fuel poverty.



ALONE is an independent charity which means we do not receive any Government funding for the running of our day-to-day services. This means we rely so much more on the support of schools, individuals and companies to continue our work with older people who need our support most.

At the moment we are focusing our efforts on providing 100 more homes for life for older people at risk of homelessness. Your donation, regardless of amount will make a direct impact on an older person's life in one or more of the following ways:

€100 - could buy essential kitchen items for an older person moving into an ALONE home

€200 - could cover the cost of a proper fireside armchair

€500 - could cover the cost of a bed and bedside locker.

€850 - could cover the cost of a washing machine, fridge and cooker.

€2,500 - could cover the cost of installing an age-friendly bathroom for an older person with mobility issues.

€3,400 - could cover the cost of insulation work to make an older person's home warmer and help save on energy bills.

€4,000 - could cover the cost of painting and decorating work needed throughout the year.

€5,000 - could cover the cost of providing essential items for older people in crisis, such as food, blankets or emergency repair work to their homes.

04. RESOURCES AVAILABLE



We aim to support all schools interested in learning more about older people and supporting the work of ALONE. We can support you in any one of the following ways:

- **Guest speaker** to go to your school and give a talk to your class
- **Powerpoint presentation** with key facts and information about older people and ALONE
- **School information** and resource pack
- **Videos** with interviews from older people, staff, volunteers and supporters
- **Merchandise** to support any fundraising or awareness raising activity you take on including: posters, t-shirts, buckets, sponsorship cards.
- **Information leaflets** with additional detail on our core services
- **Website and social media** – sign up and keep in touch with our work.

A-Z FUNDRAISING IDEAS

- A** - Abseiling, Antique Fairs, Art Exhibitions
- B** - Bag Packing, Bazaar, BBQ, Beard Shaving, Bingo, Blind Date Night, Book Sale, Bake-off
- C** - Cake Sale, Car Boot Sale, Car Wash, Carol Singing, Casino Night, Christmas Day Swim, Coffee Mornings, Coin Collections, Comedy Night, Concert
- D** - Dance-A-Thon, Darts Tournament, Dinner Dance / Party, Dog Walking, Donations In Lieu of Presents, Dress Down Day At Work, Duck Race
- E** - Easter Egg Hunt, Egg & Spoon Race, Exercise Bike Marathon, Exhibitions
- F** - Face Painting, Fancy Dress, Fashion Show, Festivals, Fishing Competition, Flower Show, Football Match, Fortune Telling, Fun Run
- G** - Gala Evening, Garden Party, Girls V Boys Day / Event, Give Up Something For Lent And Get It Sponsored!, Golf Tournament, Good As New Sale, Greyhound Meeting, Guess the Amount Competition
- H** - Halloween Fancy Dress, Head Shave, Hill Walking, Horse Race
- I** - Individual Gifts, Indoor Games Night, Irish Coffee Morning
- J** - James Bond Event, Jigsaw Puzzle Challenge, Joke Competition, Juggling Challenge, Jumble Sale
- K** - Karaoke Evening, Kite Flying, Knit In, Kris Kindle
- L** - Lawn Mowing, Leg Waxing, Line Dancing, Litter Collection, Lottery, Lunch-Time Event
- M** - Magic Show, Marathons/Mini Marathon, Masque Ball, Matched Giving From Companies, Mountain Climbing, Murder Mystery Evening
- N** - New Year's Eve Party, No Uniform Day
- O** - Obstacle Course, Old Time Dance Event
- P** - Parachute Jumps, Payroll Deduction, Pet Show, Pie Eating Competition, Poetry Competition, Pool Competition
- Q** - Quiz Night
- R** - Race Night, Raffle, Rag Weeks, Role Reversal Day
- S** - Scrabble Tournaments, Sleep-Out, Sponsored Events, Sponsored Silence, Sports Day, Spot the Baby Photo Competition, Swear Box, Swimathon
- T** - Talent Competition, Tea Party, Teddy Bear's Picnic, Tennis Tournament, Theatre Premiere, Theme Evening, Three-Legged Race, Treasure Hunt, Treks, Tug-O-War, Tombola, Take Me Out Night
- U** - Unwanted Christmas Presents Sale,
- V** - Valentine's Day Event, Variety Show (Sketches, Song, Dance, Readings)
- W** - Walks, Weigh-A-Thons, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, Window Cleaning, World Record Attempt
- X** - Xmas Pantomime, X-Factor Party
- Y** - Yacht Race, Yodeling Competition, Yoga event
- Z** - Zodiac Readings, Zzzzz - Sponsored Sleep-In (or even Stay-Awake!)

1. Write a list of all the people you met yesterday and what you talked about.

Aim – to get students to imagine what it would be like if they didn't meet anyone.

2. Write 10 questions you could ask an older person in your area to try to get a better understanding of what their life is like.

Aim – make students aware of the environment they share with older people.

3. Write a blog from the perspective of a lonely older person.

Aim – make students reflect on life for an older person on their own.

4. What would an older person do if s/he was made Taoiseach for the day?

Aim – reflect on practical ways older people's lives could be improved.

5. Brainstorm exercise – encourage students to think about their perceptions of older people.

- a. What age do you consider a person to be old?
- b. What adjectives come to mind when you think of older people – list 10?
- c. Describe an older person you know
- d. What do you think you will be like at 25, 35, 45.....
- e. What needs do older people have?
- f. Three problems older people face?
- g. Think of a famous older person and write down what they have achieved in their life

This exercise could be done individually, in pairs or small groups with feedback into the class.

6. Reading exercise – Divide the class into 4 or 5 small groups. Give each group a different case study to work on. Have 5 questions for each group to answer about their case study.

When they are finished they should share the answers with the class. Questions should be formatted so that when the answers are read to the class everyone gets an understanding of the case study.

7. Reading exercise 2 – Have articles from newspapers (online if possible) about issues relating to older people.

In small groups get the students to read the articles and answer questions about them and feedback their answers to the class. Questions should be formatted so that when the answers are read to the class everyone gets an understanding of the article.

8. Role play – assign each student in the class a role of an older person. Give them information about their older person, e.g. name, age, life story, any problems they have (and how ALONE has helped them?) and give the students a few minutes to read it (a photograph of the older person could also be provided).

Then give students 10 minutes to 'have a cup of tea' with another person and find out all about them. The roles could be based on real older people ALONE has worked with or could be fictitious. To extend the exercise students could 'have a cup of tea' with a couple of other people.

9. Writing exercise – Write a poem (100 words) about older people or old age.

This could be entered into an annual ALONE poetry competition (with entries from all the schools), and used as social media campaign at Christmas or other times of the year.

10. A day in the life (homework) exercise – Each student must talk to an older person and get information about a typical day.

This could be a grandparent, older neighbour, family friend etc.

11. Debating exercise – Break the class into a number of small teams. Give each team a motion relating to older people and tell them if they are for or against it.

Give them time to prepare and then get them to debate the motion.

Some ideas of motions could be:

- The government should provide supports so that older people can stay at home for longer
- It should be a legal requirement for older people to live with their families
- The retirement age should be increased to 75
- Once people are over 60 they are old

Teachers and students could come up with other motions.

12. Quiz exercise – 10 questions based on statistics about older people in Ireland and around the world. (Tie-in with International Day of Older People on 1st October).

Case-Study: Campaigning



Mary is 84. She was hospitalised over two years ago with pneumonia. She is not currently in need of acute medical care but remained in hospital due to a delay between solicitors and doctors transferring her to a nursing home. Mary had no family who were able to advocate on her behalf and she remained in hospital with no social or emotional support for almost two years. ALONE campaigned to the hospital and solicitors to ensure steps were taken to move her to the comfort of a nursing home.

Our population is getting older. Today, 12% of the population is 65+. By 2040 this will increase to 22% of the population.

Case-Study: Housing



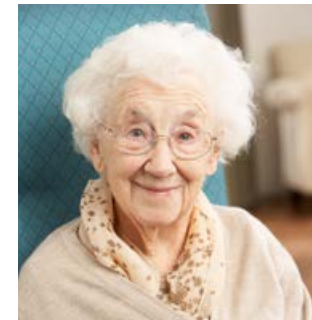
Tommy is 70 years old. When he made contact with ALONE he was living in a damp bedsit on the second floor. He had to climb up a flight of stairs to use the shared toilet and shower which added to his mobility problems. These cramped and unsuitable living conditions were having a seriously negative impact on his mental health. Thankfully an age friendly home with ALONE became available for Tommy. The Housing Support Team worked with him as he adjusted to his new surroundings and circumstances. Tommy is settling in very well to his new home. He is making new friends and he also has a volunteer who visits him on a weekly basis for a cup of tea and a chat.

Between 2005-2009, 400 older people died as a direct result of the temperature in their homes.

“Since ALONE made contact with me my confidence is coming back. There is some purpose in the week. Something to look forward to instead of an aimless and pointless existence.”

Leo (69)

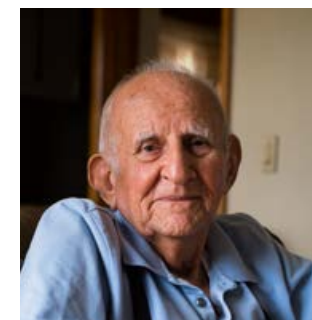
Case-Study: Befriending



Cathy is a 73 year old retired teacher who is originally from New York, but has been living in Dublin for the past 17 years. She has no children or siblings, and was very close to her mother until her death in 1998. Due to her declining health and limited mobility, Cathy is now housebound; she has not been outside her home since May 2012. Because of this, she relies on her ALONE volunteer, Marge, for the human contact and company she needs, as aside from Cathy's home help, Marge is the only person Cathy sees regularly. Cathy is delighted with her visits, and considers Marge to be a good friend. “I'd be lost without her” says Cathy. “She's a lovely woman and is so good to me. She even came to visit me when I spent 2 months in hospital, which was great as I knew I would have a visitor each week”.

Referrals to ALONE's befriending service tripled between 2012 and 2013.

Case-Study: Community Response



Owen is 75 years old. He is a former chef and also worked in manufacturing for over 20 years. He suffers from vertigo, high blood pressure, limited mobility and poor hearing. He had one child, a son, who sadly passed away in 2009. Owen came to ALONE recently looking for help with a large utility bill that he had received. On getting to know Owen, we discovered that due to his mobility issues it was increasingly difficult for him to get upstairs to his bedroom. As a result he was sleeping downstairs in his living room on a small two-seater couch which was very uncomfortable and exacerbated his physical health problems. ALONE converted his living room into a downstairs bedroom supplying a new bed, locker, bedclothes, curtains and lighting as well as re-painting and carpeting the room. ‘It's much more comfortable for me and I'm very happy with the work that was done, it's made a big difference to me’ he says. Owen now has a comfortable room to sleep in and is much happier. ‘ALONE have been very good to me and I really appreciate all the help and support they have given me’ Owen says.

Demand for ALONE services is increasing every year.

GET IN TOUCH

Our supportive housing service receives 26+ applications for every house that becomes available. This means, for every older person we give a home to, we turn 25 away, some of whom are living in shocking housing conditions.

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