

# FACES OF DIGNITY

CANADA



*Facilitator's Guide*



GLOBAL  
DIGNITY



GLOBALDIGNITY.ORG

*“In a world where it seems no-one agrees on anything, a world where politics divides, religion divides, and race and even cultural borders seem to divide, dignity is something that everyone can agree on.”*

*– Global Dignity Co-Founders*

## REGISTER YOUR SCHOOL

As a participating school partner, we kindly ask that you complete our online registration form as soon as possible so that we are able to support the coordination efforts across the country as well as report back to our colleagues from around the world with the number of schools, volunteers and students involved.

Please visit [www.globaldignity.ca](http://www.globaldignity.ca) to register, to see a listing of participating schools and training materials in English and French.

## OUTLINE

Please note that this guide is only meant as a suggestion on how to celebrate Global Dignity Day (GDD); this is a guide, not a set of rules. As long as you stay within the spirit of the Global Dignity Principles, feel free to tweak the format and the activities to better suit your students. If the program outlined below is too much of a time commitment for you, quicker and lower-prep activities are suggested at the end of the guide (*before the Appendix*).

A typical GDD event involves an inspirational speaker for the opening plenary, facilitated learning activities in the classrooms and a closing plenary where students share stories with their peers. As the school leader, you can choose to bring in external facilitators from local community organizations or to designate staff members from within your school.

The GDD program is suitable for both elementary and secondary schools and is intended to foster character development among students. There are many ways of organizing GDD and you can feel free to adapt this framework to meet the needs of your local context. However, please remember to stay within the spirit of the Global Dignity Principles and keep us informed of your plans and activities!

**GLOBAL DIGNITY PRINCIPLES:**

1. Every human being has a right to a dignified life.
2. A dignified life means the opportunity to fulfil your potential. This means having a humane level of healthcare, education, income and security.
3. Dignity means having the freedom to make decisions about your life and to be treated with respect with regard to this right.
4. Dignity should be the basic guiding principle behind all actions.
5. Ultimately, our dignity depends upon the dignity of others.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:****Students will learn:**

- About the meaning of dignity through a variety of methods and perspectives.
- About why dignity is important.
- That they are able to contribute constructively to the dignity of others through the actions they choose to take.
- About the concept of interdependence; that helping others to live a dignified life also contributes to their own dignity.



## THE GDD PROGRAM CONSISTS OF THREE MAIN COMPONENTS:

### Opening plenary (approx. 30 min)

- **5 min** - The head of the school opens the day
- **10 min** - GDD volunteer provides inspirational speech and overview
- **5 min** - Selected student shares dignity story
- **10 min** - Travel time to classrooms

### Facilitated class- room activities (approx. 80 min)

- If necessary, facilitator introduces him/herself
- **5 min** - Brainstorm to get a rough idea of what dignity means
- **5 min** - Facilitator provides brief examples of dignity stories
- **10 min** - Discussion about Global Dignity Principles
- **20 min** - Interactive activities and student presentations
- **15 min** - Students prepare and share dignity stories
- **15 min** - Students write personal pledges to dignity
- **10 min** - Travel time to plenary session

### Closing plenary (approx. 30 min)

- **5 min** – Facilitator creates a safe space for sharing personal stories
- **25 min** - Selected students present their stories of dignity to the school
- Closing remarks by the head of the school

## OVERALL PREPARATIONS

**Below is a checklist of items that need to be prepared prior to Global Dignity Day.**

- Preparations have been made for an inspirational speaker to speak about dignity.
- A student has been chosen and has prepared an appropriate dignity story for the opening plenary (*the story should be approved by a staff member*).
- Teachers and facilitators have been briefed and are prepared to facilitate classroom learning activities.
- Teachers and facilitators know which route to take between plenary sessions and classrooms so that traffic is minimized.
- Teachers and facilitators are prepared to help/protect students who open up and tell personal stories that are difficult for them.
- The students know which group they will be in.
- A space has been prepared for the plenary sessions with enough seating for all students (*ex. auditorium or cafeteria*).

- Technical equipment has been checked and is in working order (*microphones, sound equipment and projector if videos are to be shown*).
- Classrooms have been booked and prepared (*ex. tables and chairs arranged into groups, writing materials for facilitator and students etc. – further details provided in “Classroom Learning Activities” section below*).
- Optional: Familiarize the students ahead of time with the purpose of GDD as well as the Global Dignity Principles.

## **OPENING PLENARY – APPROX. 30 MINUTES** (*includes travel time to classrooms*)

### **ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Opening – 5 min**

The head of the school opens the day by briefly explaining what GDD is and why the school has organized the event. At this stage it is a good idea to refer to relevant school subjects and activities that the school is involved in (*ex. anti-bullying programmes, inclusion programmes, solidarity projects, friendship schools etc.*).

#### **Inspirational Speech – 10 min**

The role of the volunteer speaker is to inspire the students and to create the right atmosphere for the rest of the event.

The speech might include:

- A brief explanation of what dignity means.
- Why one should care about global dignity.
- An example of how one might contribute constructively to the dignity of others.
- Showing the following 2-minute video: <http://www.youtube.com/user/GlobalDignityDay#p/u/3/fPHsjsdAR4Q>

#### **Student Story – 5 min**

One of the students at the school tells a dignity story that she/he has prepared in advance (*and that has been approved by a staff member*). This must be well thought out so that it strikes the right chords in terms of the concepts of dignity and gives the students associations and inspiration for the discussions in the classrooms.

#### **Plenary Wrap-up**

The plenary facilitator concludes the session by briefly explaining what is going to happen in the classrooms and the closing plenary. They are also responsible for emphasizing when all the students should return for the closing plenary.

#### **Travel Time to Classrooms – 10 min**



**CLASSROOM LEARNING ACTIVITIES – APPROX. 80MINUTES** *(includes travel time to Closing Plenary)*

**Preparations:**

- All the classrooms have a blackboard, whiteboard or a flip chart.
- The tables in the classrooms have been arranged so that the students can work in groups of 4-6 people.
- The Global Dignity Principles have been written down on a piece of flip chart paper so that they can be quickly presented when needed.
- The students will need flip chart paper, markers and pens/pencils.
- There should either be a drop box for the pledge letters or a banner to stick personal pledges on *(details described below)*.

**Activities:**

Below you will find multiple suggestions on how to facilitate each activity. However, you are by no means confined to these options. Please feel free to facilitate the activities in a method that you think will work best for your group of students.

**Brainstorm – 5 min**

Start by leading a brainstorming activity to see what the students already know about dignity and to discuss why the concept of dignity is important. For example, you could ask them “What does it mean to live with dignity?” and “Why is dignity important to us?”

Suggestion	Benefits
Ask the questions to the class and wait for students to raise their hand and offer a response. Write their responses down on the flip chart/blackboard <i>(one column for what dignity means and one for why it's important)</i> and keep them there for the entire session so that the students can refer back to them and so that you can add new ideas and definitions that arise.	Ideas are consolidated into one list.
Hand out markers and a piece of flip chart paper to each group. Ask the questions to the class and have them brainstorm and write their ideas onto the paper themselves <i>(again, one column for what dignity means and one for why it's important)</i> . Then tape each group's paper onto a wall and take a few moments to review the responses with the whole class.	Given the same amount of time, you end up with more ideas and responses.  Allows students who don't like speaking in front of the class to contribute their ideas in the comfort of a smaller group.
Feel free to create your own Brainstorming activity!	Please share your ideas with us, facilitators around the world can all benefit from great activities.

## EXAMPLES OF DIGNITY STORIES – 5 MIN

Once the students have established a rough idea of what dignity is and why they should care, provide them with examples of dignity stories (*either personal or stories of others*). Telling sample stories is another way of helping the students grasp the meaning of dignity but it also gives them an idea of the kinds of stories you are expecting them to create at the end of the GDD session. Sample stories are provided in the Appendix at the end of this guide.

Perhaps you might want to share two stories: one that involves a “big” act that contributes to global dignity and one that involves a “small” everyday act. Stories about “big” acts are good because they show students that it is possible for even one person to create great positive impact on the world. However, focusing on “small” acts is equally, if not more, important because you don’t want to make the students feel as though their everyday acts are insignificant. In fact, “small” everyday acts can add up to have great impact as well! It’s important to make this clear for the students.

## Global Dignity Principles – 10 min

Assuming that each class will have roughly 5 groups of 5-6 students, assign one Global Dignity Principle to each group. All groups will have 5 minutes to prepare before giving their presentation in front of the class.

Each group will take turns giving a 1-minute presentation, which includes:

- Reading out the Global Dignity Principle they were assigned.
- Explaining in their own words what it means.
- Explaining why it’s important.

## Interactive Activities & Presentations – 20 min

To keep the students involved and to help them develop a deeper understanding of dignity, allow them some time to think and be creative. Explain the options below to the students, take a poll and split the students into groups based on the option they choose (*ex. The students who like to draw will be together, the students who like to act will be together and the students who like to write will be together – if any particular group is too large, you might consider breaking the group into multiple smaller groups*). Give them 10 minutes to prepare and approximately 2 minutes per group to present.

**Suggestion**

**Benefits**

Give the group paper and coloured markers and ask them to draw a person who is living with dignity. They could create one large collaborative drawing or small individual drawings but encourage them to be detailed. Ask them: “What would they see?” “What would they smell?” “What would they hear?” “What tastes would they have in their mouths?” “What would they be feeling?”

Students who have weak literacy skills might prefer to draw.

Give the group a piece of flip chart paper and ask them to come up with words/short phrases that relate to dignity, one word/short phrase for each letter of the alphabet (*ex. A is for Appreciating diversity, B is for Building empathy, C is for Compassion etc.*).

Brainstorming a list of words will come in handy when the students need to create their dignity stories at the end of the GDD session.

Ask the students to create a skit or a tableau which depicts an act that contributes to global dignity.

Students who are active and outgoing might prefer this option.

Feel free to create your own interactive activity!

Please share your ideas with us, facilitators around the world can all benefit from great activities.

After 10 minutes is up, have the groups come to the front of the room and present their work as well as a brief explanation of how it exemplifies dignity.

**Prepare and Share Dignity Stories – 15 min**

Now it’s time for the students to tell stories of dignity! Again, the stories can be personal or they can be about other people. Remind the students that their stories should be:

- A positive story about contributions to global dignity.
- Positive examples we can learn from.
- Aware of and protective of the third party (*people that are mentioned in the story*).



Their stories should not be about:

- Examples where someone’s dignity is stolen from them (*the atmosphere should be kept positive!*).
- Serious law violations such as physical or sexual abuse.

Allow approximately 5 minutes for the students to work independently and create their stories, 5 minutes to share their stories in their smaller groups and then 5 minutes for any students who feel comfortable sharing their stories to the entire class (*this also provides practice for students who wish to present their stories to the entire school at the closing plenary*).

**Facilitator Notes:**

- Make sure you emphasize that “small” everyday acts can add up to have great impact as well. You want to make the students feel as though there is no such thing as an insignificant act of building dignity.
- Make sure that you circulate the classroom and listen to the stories being told. A welcoming atmosphere is essential. It takes courage to talk about personal experiences and it is important to provide encouragement and support.
- Make note of the stories you think could be suitable to be presented at the closing plenary.
- After hearing their stories, emphasize how their own dignity is mutually dependent on the dignity of others.

**Possible points for discussion:**

- Which of the Global Dignity Principles apply to the specific ideas that have emerged?
- If time permits, you might want to explore some of the complicated ideas more deeply so that all the students share the same understanding of them (*ex. respect, status, honour etc.*).

**Pledge to Dignity – 15 min**

Ask the students to make a pledge to dignity by committing themselves to a concrete and realistic action for the next year (*ex. “I will help others” is too vague. “I will spend 2 hours each week helping my younger brother with his homework” is a clear and realistic pledge*). The students should be able to explain to you how their pledge contributes to global dignity.

**Suggestion**

The students can write their pledge to dignity in the form of a letter to themselves and submit them into your drop box. These letters should be photocopied so that the student can keep the original and the teacher can keep a copy to review with them later on in the year.

**Benefits**

Since other students won't see their pledges, the student can make it as personal as they want.

You can create an attractive banner by having the students write their pledges on fun-shaped paper that they can tape onto the banner (*ex. The banner can be a tree and each student's pledge can be an apple that they stick onto a branch*). Ideally, this banner would be posted up in the classroom or somewhere visible in the school (*ex. In the foyer*).

Constantly seeing their pledges will serve as a reminder for them.

Seeing their pledge amongst so many others may invoke feelings of belonging to something greater.

Feel free to create your own way of documenting the pledges!

Please share your ideas with us, facilitators around the world can all benefit from great activities.

**Facilitator Notes:**

- If possible, take a group photo!
- While the students are creating their pledges, ask the students with suitable stories if they would like to share their story during the closing plenary. Offer them the following three options:
  1. The student tells the story her/himself.
  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 less depending on how many classes are taking part*). A total of approximately 20 dignity stories tend to work well.

**Travel Time to Closing Plenary – 10 min**

## CLOSING PLENARY AND DIGNITY STORIES – APPROX. 30 MINUTES

### Preparations:

- Technical equipment has been checked to make sure it is in working order.
- The students who have agreed to tell their stories are prepared and lined up in front of the stage.
- The facilitators from the classes are standing by the students, ready to help them if they get nervous.
- Teachers and facilitators are prepared for any other students who suddenly wish to tell their stories – the teacher/facilitator needs to check with the student to ensure that the story is appropriate.

### Activities:

#### Creating a Safe Space for Sharing – 5 min

The plenary facilitator is responsible for explaining what is to happen (*ex. “Your peers will be providing you with examples of what they, or people they know, have done to contribute to the dignity of others...”*). It is also crucial that the plenary facilitator creates a safe space for sharing.

#### Facilitator Notes:

- Emphasize to everyone that it takes a lot of courage to come up on stage.
- Ask the audience to be respectful and applaud for each story; inappropriate comments will not be tolerated!

#### Dignity Stories – 25 min

One-by-one the students come up and take the microphone. The stories stand alone and need no comment, only applause at the end. Each student shakes the facilitator’s hand and exits the stage.

**Facilitator Notes:**

- If a student suffers from a mental block, take the microphone and stress again how much courage it takes to be on the stage in front of all their peers, ask for a round of applause and ask the student if she/he is now ready.
- If any of the stories become 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.

**Closing – 5 min**

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

**IS THIS EVENT TOO MUCH OF A TIME COMMITMENT?**

We understand that as an educator, you have a lot on your plate. If the above suggestion on how to celebrate GDD is too much of a time commitment for you please feel free to tweak it to make it more manageable. We would love for you to join us in celebrating this special day in any way that you can.

**As a suggestion, what about these quick, low-prep activities?**

Broadcasting Student Stories of Dignity Throughout the Year on Your PA System This activity will take roughly 15 minutes to execute and requires little to no prep. It is a great way of keeping Global Dignity on the minds of your students over the long term.

- Figure out when it is convenient for the entire school to take a 15 minute chunk of time
- Use the PA system (*or whatever method you think is most effective at your school*) to broadcast the instructions to each class
  - A person does not have a choice in whether they are born into a poor family or born into a rich family. But regardless of what environment this person is born into, they have the right to a dignified life. This means having access to healthcare, education, income and security so that they can fulfill their potential.
  - Although none of us could choose what circumstances we were born into, what we can choose are our actions. We are not independent of one another, we are all interconnected! Our actions affect the lives of others and the actions of other people affect our lives. We can use this fact for positivity or negativity: it is our choice!
  - Write a short story about an experience that you know of (you could be involved or it could be a story about people you know) where the actions of one person had a POSITIVE effect on the

life of another person; in other words, they contributed POSITIVELY to the other person's dignity. You can make the story anonymous or you can feel free to put your name on the page - just make sure to protect the identity of people that are mentioned in your story in case they don't want to be exposed

- These stories will be broadcasted on our PA system to acknowledge the positivity that people are spreading. However, if for some reason you don't want your story to be read, you have the option to not submit your story to the teacher or to write "please don't read" at the top of your page
- Finish on the PA system by providing an example story to the school so that it is clear what you are looking for. Feel free to tell your own short story or to use one of the stories provided in the Appendix of the GDD Facilitator's Guide
- Have the teachers collect all the stories and submit them to the organizer
- Each day or each week or each month, whatever works for you, broadcast one of the student's stories on the PA system at the beginning of the day as a way of reminding the students about Global Dignity and their ability to make someone happier

### THE WEB OF INTERCONNECTION GAME

This activity will take roughly 15 minutes to execute and requires little to no prep, each class needs a good quality roll of string.

- Create an open space in the classroom so that students can move around
- Have the students stand in a circle around the teacher
- The teacher goes around to each student in a random fashion, looping the string around their wrists and tying a knot (*so that each student is fixed onto the string*)
- Continue to do so until all students have a piece of the string tied around their wrists and what results is a complicated web of string & students
- The goal of the game is for the students to undo the mess by working together so that they could stand in one line without being tangled to each other
- Have a quick discussion on the idea of interconnectedness - that this game symbolizes how humanity operates as one organism: we cannot do something without affecting another person and vice versa; we are affected by the actions of others. In this way they see that to solve any issue, they must work together and consider the impact of their actions on other people
- The teacher then cuts the string IN BETWEEN students only, leaving the loop & knot around their wrists in tact so that it acts as a bracelet that they can keep as a reminder of the activity and the lesson that goes with it (*this is why it's nice to buy good quality string - if possible*)



## APPENDIX

Below are suggestions for points of discussion.

### Brainstorm – 5 min

#### What does dignity mean?

- Being able to reach your potential and achieve your goals.
- Having access to basic levels of education, healthcare, security and income (*this includes food and shelter*).
- Being able to live a decent life.

#### Why is dignity important?

Everyone has the same fundamental goal: to be happy and free from suffering. We would all be closer to realizing this goal if we were all kinder to one another.

We are all interconnected. Therefore, helping one person to live with dignity means helping everyone (*ex. By ensuring that a child gets an education, the child could grow up and use their thinking skills to help do positive things for others*).

## EXAMPLES OF DIGNITY STORIES – 5 MIN

### Story A

*This story involves a “big” act that contributes to dignity. Stories such as this one can help show students that the actions of one person (or in this case, two people) can have a great impact on another person’s life.*

*“My parents grew up in India where they were very poor.*

*My dad moved to Canada when he was 17, went to school and often had multiple jobs to save up money. Many people love having new things but my dad sacrificed this luxury. He always bought used items and clothes from Goodwill (a thrift store) even long after I was born. He wanted to make sure that he saved up enough money to send me to university.*

*My mom moved to Canada when she was 22 to study and get a college degree. She lived in a shelter where she shared a room with a dozen other women. This meant that when she wanted to study late*

*at night she had to find somewhere else in the building that had lighting. Unfortunately, the only place she could find that was safe and well lit was the washroom. For years, she studied late at night in a washroom stall so that she could complete her degree and get a decent job to support her family.*

*This exemplifies dignity because by deciding to work hard and sacrifice luxuries, my parents saved me from being born into poverty as they had been. I received a good education, had 3 meals a day, lived in a clean house and had access to healthcare that was covered by insurance.”*

### **Story B**

*This story involves a “small” act that contributes to dignity. Stories such as this one can help show students that an act that costs us very little can help someone else in a big way.*

*“I had a friend who would buy food for homeless people. For example, if he left the office to buy lunch and saw a homeless person on the way, he would order something extra (maybe a sandwich) that he could give to the homeless person on the way back to the office.*

*This exemplifies dignity because it’s extremely difficult to be happy and to realize your potential if basic needs such as food are not met. My friend helped people who were very hungry”*

### **Story C**

*This story involves a “small” act that contributes to dignity. Stories such as this one can help show students that small everyday acts can have a large impact over time.*

*“I always had a difficult time in Physics because, although I was very interested in the concepts, math never came easily to me. However, I always ended up doing fairly well on tests and exams because of my friend. She would encourage me to have review sessions with her where she would teach me the important concepts that I had difficulty with (she always did really well). I felt bad because I thought I was wasting her time by slowing her down but she always said that she enjoyed it because teaching me also helped her understand the concepts more deeply (although I always suspected that she helped me more than I helped her).*

**This exemplifies dignity because by volunteering her time for a friend, she helped me realize my goals (of passing the course with good grades and being accepted to the post-secondary school of my choice)”**

GLOBAL DIGNITY PRINCIPLES – 10 MIN

Global Dignity Principle	What it means	Why it's important
<b>Every human being has a right to a dignified life.</b>	Whether you are born into a rich or poor family, you deserve to have the basic needs that allow you to reach your potential and live a decent life.	In a very complex way, we are all interconnected. Helping one person means helping humanity as a whole.
<b>A dignified life means the opportunity to fulfill your potential. This means having a humane level of healthcare, education, income and security.</b>	Self explanatory.	In a very complex way, we are all interconnected. Helping one person means helping humanity as a whole.
<b>Dignity means having the freedom to make decisions about your life and to be treated with respect with regard to this right.</b>	All lives are equally valuable. One person should not have control over the life of another.	Humanity misses out on positivity, creativity and growth every time someone is prevented from reaching their potential.
<b>Dignity should be the basic guiding principle behind all actions.</b>	Before you do something, think about whether it builds dignity or steals it away.	The world would be a more positive place where everyone can grow if people think before they act.
<b>Ultimately, our dignity depends upon the dignity of others.</b>	Helping someone else realize their potential also helps us realize that we have the ability to create positive change, this contributes to our dignity as well.	When we realize that we're all interconnected, we'll stop focusing on just ourselves and start living as if we are a part of something greater. This will help a greater number of people than if we were all selfish.

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES & PRESENTATIONS – 20 MIN

**Drawing** The students might draw a picture of a person in a house (*security*).

**See:** They might draw books in the house (*education*) and a hospital nearby (*healthcare*)

**Hear:** They might draw wind and birds chirping (*instead of hearing gun fire and bombs*)

**Smell:** They might draw flowers (*instead of smelling waste*)

**Taste:** They might draw fresh fruits and vegetables in the kitchen

**Feel:** They might draw a smile on the person (*indicating that they are happy and at peace*)

### Writing

**A** *acknowledging, affection, acceptance, actions, appreciation, assistance, abundance*

**B** *believe, building, beautiful*

**C** *caring, controlled, courage, compassion, community*

**D** *daring, dreamer, diverse*

**E** *education, effect, encouraging, equity, exceptional, empathy, environment, exciting*

**F** *friend, fun, food, fair*

**G** *giving, goodness, grateful, generous*

**H** *healthcare, helping, hope, hugs, honesty, harmony, honouring*

**I** *income, interdependent, intelligent, insightful*

**J** *joyful, just*

**K** *kindness, kindred*

**L** *loving*

**M** *moving, mature, mother, merry, meaning, mindful, mutual, multicultural*

**N** *niceness, necessities, not being mean, needs*

**O** *opportunity, opinion, openness, optimistic*

**P** *people, politeness, peace, personality, passion, potential*

**Q** *quality, question, quick thinking*

**R** *respect, rights*

**S** *security, sweet, seek, smart, security, saviours, shelter, sensitive, self-esteem*

**T** *thankful, trust, togetherness*

**U** *understanding, unified, unselfish*

**V** *value, volunteer, valuable*

**W** *women's rights, welcoming, wonderful, water, willing*

**X** *xylophone sounds*

**Y** *you, youth*

**Z** *zealous, zen*

### Acting

*The students might create a skit which shows a person volunteering their time to teach a group of immigrants how to create an effective cover letter and resume so that they have a better chance at getting a job. The skit could end with one of the people being offered a position.*

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