

# Vocabulary Ex.: Social Issues

## 1 Contemporary issues

Match these issues with the extracts from the newspaper reports:

sexual discrimination  
teenage pregnancies  
gay rights  
homelessness

drug abuse  
animal rights  
racism  
class

1.

The Government has expressed concern that the number of school-girls under the age of sixteen becoming pregnant has risen rapidly and Britain now heads the European league table.

2.

Statistics show that 20% of teenagers in the area are regularly using heroin. Police believe that at least half of the crime in the area is drug-related.

3.

The Government wants us to believe that we are living in a classless society but a recent report shows that 45% of people still believe they are working class while only 25% describe themselves as middle class.

4.

A number of people were arrested today during a protest outside a laboratory where they say scientists are testing cosmetics on monkeys.

5.

The Government is becoming worried about the number of teenagers sleeping rough on the streets in London. Many of them are in danger of becoming involved with drugs and prostitution.

6.

Mrs Fenton claims that she was denied promotion after she told colleagues she was planning to have a baby.

7.

Cardiff police are investigating after a young black student was attacked by a group of white youths last night. They believe the attack was racially motivated.

8.

Airline steward Alan Paul claims he is being discriminated against on grounds of his sexual orientation. He is demanding the same travel privileges for his gay partner as are available to the husbands and wives of his married colleagues.

Now complete the phrases below with words from the extracts opposite. Read carefully.

- Politicians say we are living in a ..... society.
- More and more young people are sleeping ..... on the streets.
- Homeless youngsters can easily become ..... with drugs and prostitution.
- Police believe the attack was ..... motivated.
- A lot of crime in the area is drug-.....
- Many people believe it is wrong to discriminate against people on the basis of their sexual .....

## 2 Collocations

Match each word on the left with a word on the right:

1. race	a. families
2. the gay	b. rights
3. inner-city	c. minorities
4. ethnic	d. relations
5. human	e. community
6. single-parent	f. areas

Now use the complete phrases in the following sentences:

- In some countries people are denied basic ..... like free speech.
- Community leaders are working to improve ..... after a number of recent incidents involving black and white youths.
- Senior police officers, concerned that there are so few black and Asian officers, are hoping that a new campaign will encourage more people from ..... to join the force.
- A recent report confirms that schools in ..... have the worst exam results.
- Members of the ..... have been warned to take extra care after a rise in the number of homophobic attacks in the area.
- Many of our current problems are unfairly blamed on the growing number of ..... .

### 3 Problems with drugs

Match the verbs on the left with the phrases on the right to make four sentences. Use one of the endings twice.

Children	are	drugs.
	are taking	with drugs.
	are using	on drugs.
	are experimenting	

Now use these words to complete the text below:

addicts      overdose      soft drugs  
hard drugs    dealers

A recent report says that in some parts of the city, more than a quarter of young people are regularly using drugs.

Most teenagers start by taking (1) .... like cannabis and marijuana, but many soon begin to experiment with cocaine and heroin. Once they have moved on to (2) ...., they are much more likely to become addicted.

People in the worst affected area say that it's impossible to leave the house without being stopped by (3) .... asking for money to buy drugs or by (4) .... trying to sell them. Last week a 14-year-old boy died from a heroin (5) ....

### 4 What you can do

Choose the correct ending for each sentence:

1. I'm protesting	a. the petition.
2. I went on	b. a demonstration / protest march.
3. I'm boycotting	c. against the new motorway / the arms trade / nuclear weapons.
4. I've already signed	d. them until they pay their workers properly / the meeting.

### 5 Taking action

Do these verbs fit in sentence A or B?

avoid    tackle    face    ignore    address

- A. The Government needs to ..... the problem.
- B. The Government can't ..... the problem.

Now mark each of the expressions below, C or D, depending on which pattern it fits:

- C. The Government needs to .....
- D. The Government can't just .....

- 1. leave things as they are
- 2. do something about it
- 3. hope the problem will go away
- 4. take action
- 5. do nothing
- 6. act now

### 6 Other issues

Use the following words to complete these short descriptions of other social issues:

trap    bullying    housing    abuse    domestic

- 1. We hear a lot today about child ....., but it's not new. In the past people just didn't talk about it.
- 2. One issue which is still a taboo subject in a lot of families is ..... violence.
- 3. We don't like to admit it, but there is still far too much sub-standard ..... around.
- 4. A major cause of suicide among young people is ..... at school.
- 5. Today thousands of people are caught in the poverty .....