Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships

Teaching for social and emotional learning and respectful relationships

Level
3–4
Learning Materials

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

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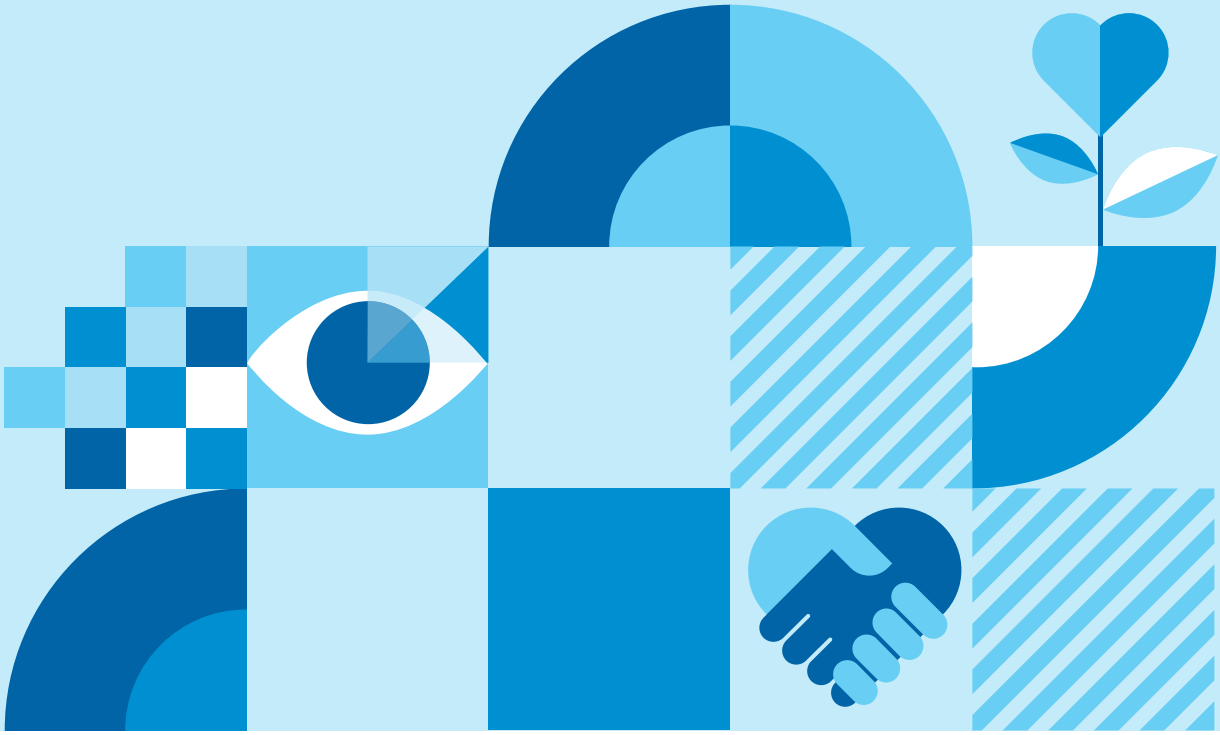


Contents

Introduction to the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationship Resource

Introduction overview	4
Using a research-informed approach to wellbeing education	6
Advancing learning and wellbeing	6
Why provide social and emotional learning?	6
What is Respectful Relationships Education?	8
What is consent education?	8
Why include a focus on gender norms and stereotypes?	9
Positive effects of RRE	10
Why commence RRE in primary school?	10
Why provide RRE across the secondary school years?	10
Why use gender-inclusive approaches?	11
Teaching protective behaviours to support prevention of child abuse	11
The importance of a whole-school approach	11
Where does the RRRR resource fit within the school curriculum?	12
Effective implementation	13
Teacher professional preparedness and support	14
Setting up a safe social space	14
Teaching sensitive material	15
Supporting the Child Safe Standards	16
Teacher-initiated conversations following possible signs of distress	16
Dealing with resistance and backlash	17
Understanding the ways resistance and backlash can present in schools	18
Responding to student expressions of hate speech	19
Parents and carers as partners	20

Contents

Level 3-4 Resource 21

Introductory activities 22

Activity 1: A name game 22
Activity 2: A getting-to-know-you game 22
Activity 3: We help to make our class a good place for everyone 23

Topic 01 Emotional Literacy 24

Activity 1: What do emotions look like? 26
Activity 2: Emotional triggers 28
Activity 3: Emotions across the school day 30

Topic 02 Personal and Cultural Strengths 32

Activity 1: How we use our personal and cultural strengths 34
Activity 2: Respect for people, respect for Country 37
Activity 3: Using strengths to grow respect 41
Activity 4: Using our strengths in different situations 43
Activity 5: Respect for diversity 49

Topic 03 Positive Coping 52

Activity 1: Using games to talk about coping 53
Activity 2: Coping when we feel strong emotions 54
Activity 3: Taming angry feelings 56
Activity 4: Making apologies 58

Topic 04 Problem-Solving 60

Activity 1: Using games to talk about skills for problem-solving 61
Activity 2: Roads and roundabouts problem-solving model 63
Activity 3: Problem-solving in peer situations 66

Topic 05 Stress management 70

Activity 1: What to do when we feel stressed 71
Activity 2: Strategies for self-calming 75

Topic 06 **Help-seeking** 77

Activity 1: Communication and help-seeker scenarios 79
Activity 2: How big is the problem? 84
Activity 3: Help-seeking sources 87
Activity 4: Help-seeking role-plays 89
Activity 5: Help-seeking stories 92

Topic 07 **Gender norms and stereotypes** 94

Activity 1: My individuality – The many facets of me 96
Activity 2: Exploring gender stereotypes through stories 101
Activity 3: We can challenge gender pressures 105
Activity 4: Rights and responsibilities 108

Topic 08 **Positive gender relations** 112

Activity 1: What is violence? 115
Activity 2: What is gender-based violence? 118
Activity 3: Understanding consent in action 123
Activity 4: Using the No, Go, Tell model in response to gender-based violence 130
Activity 5: Practising asking for help in response to gender-based violence 133
Activity 6: Seeking help in tricky situations 137

Optional additional games to promote respectful relationships 140

The Sam Says Game 140
The Giant's Treasure Game 141
The Animal Grouping Game 141
Sitting Circle Game 142

Cross-referencing to catching on 143

References 147

Introduction References 147
Level 3-4 Resource References 150

Introduction to the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationship Resource

Introduction Overview

The Resilience, rights and respectful relationships (RRRR) teaching and learning resource has been designed to support primary and secondary teachers to provide social and emotional learning and respectful relationships education. The RRRR resource includes teaching and learning materials for Foundation to level 11–12.

At level 8-10, teachers and students transition to the Building Respectful Relationships (BRR) resource which focuses specifically on gendered norms, gender and power, consent, and prevention of gender-based violence. The RRRR resource is structured into 8 key topic areas. Each includes a range of learning activities.

Table 1: Topic areas in the RRRR Resource

Topic 1: Emotional literacy	Students develop the ability to be aware of, understand and use information about the emotional states of themselves and others.
Topic 2: Personal and cultural strengths	Students develop a vocabulary to help them recognise and understand strengths and positive qualities in themselves and others. They identify the values and strengths they have learnt from role models within their families and culture to think about how this guidance helps them to treat others with respect. They consider how to draw on these strengths to engage with the challenges and opportunities that life presents.
Topic 3: Positive coping	Students develop language around coping, critically reflect on their coping strategies and extend their repertoire of positive coping strategies.
Topic 4: Problem-solving	Students learn a range of problem-solving techniques to apply when confronting personal, social and ethical dilemmas. They engage in scenario-based learning tasks to practise their problem-solving skills in relevant situations.
Topic 5: Stress management	Students consider the causes of stress and develop a range of self-regulation and coping strategies they can draw on to manage stressful situations.
Topic 6: Help-seeking	Students develop skills and knowledge for peer support, peer referral and help-seeking.
Topic 7: Gender norms and stereotypes	Students consider the influence of gender norms on attitudes, opportunities and behaviour. They learn about gender equality, inclusion, human rights and the importance of relationships that respect people of all genders.
Topic 8: Positive gender relationships	Students develop an understanding that verbal, physical, emotional, financial and sexual forms of violence are harmful, and that these forms of violence can also be gendered. They learn about safe and unsafe behaviours, consent and their rights to bodily autonomy. They practice strategies they can use to assert their rights to bodily autonomy to be free from coercion or violence. They develop self-care, peer support, peer referral and help-seeking skills that they can use in response to situations involving gender-based violence within family, peer, school, community or online relationships.

Using a research-informed approach to wellbeing education

The RRRR resource uses a research-informed approach to provide age-appropriate learning activities. These activities are designed to support students' social and emotional learning so that they can develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills required for respectful relationships.

The approach is guided by research which shows that a structured curriculum for children and young people which promotes social and emotional skills and positive gender norms leads to improved health-related outcomes and subjective wellbeing. It also reduces antisocial behaviours including gender-based violence.

The wellbeing education research which informs the resource draws from a range of specialist study areas. These include studies in bullying and violence prevention, social and emotional learning, help-seeking, gender education, anti-racism education, human rights education, positive psychology, public health, child abuse prevention and prevention of gender-based violence. Guidance from this body of research is provided throughout the teaching and learning resource. Brief summaries of the evidence base are located at the start of each topic area as well as at the start of each lesson in Topics 7 and 8, where the focus is on gender norms and stereotypes, and prevention of gender-based violence. Some key findings from the research are also included in this introductory section. The resource is also informed by research studies investigating its use in primary and secondary schools. [1-7]

This iteration of the resource was informed by a series of consultations conducted in 2023 with primary and secondary students, teachers, school wellbeing staff, parents and a range of expert stakeholders. Some of these stakeholders included a Koorie working group, the Department of Education's Respectful Relationships and LGBTIQA+ reference groups as well as department advisers with expertise relating to the inclusion of culturally diverse students and students with diverse learning needs.

Advancing learning and wellbeing

The approach in this resource is consistent with the objectives of the Department of Education's research-informed Framework for School Improvement 2.0. This framework places both learning and wellbeing at the centre of school improvement and advocates the use of research to inform practice. The RRRR resource implements the Department of Education's Respectful Relationships initiative, which supports schools to embed a culture of respect and equality across the entire school community. It also supports mental health reform in schools which recognises the important role schools play in supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

- See the Department of Education's website for more information on the Framework for School Improvement 2.0: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fiso/policy
- See the Victorian Government's website for more information on the Respectful Relationships initiative: https://www.vic.gov.au/respectful-relationships

Why provide social and emotional learning?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the term used to describe research-informed teaching and learning which explicitly promotes mental wellbeing by improving students' social, emotional and positive relationship skills. Studies show that well-devised and well-implemented SEL programs help students to develop the relationship skills needed in everyday life, such as emotional awareness, empathy, perspective taking, self-regulation, cooperation, problem-solving, positive coping, responsible decision-making, peer support and help-seeking. [8] SEL initiatives have been found to be most effective when delivered within a broader wellbeing curriculum that incorporates a range of social, physical and mental health issues, when delivered by the classroom teacher, and when provided with fidelity in schools with a positive relational climate. [9]

Research into the effectiveness of SEL education highlights positive impacts in wellbeing, social and academic outcomes. Students who participate in SEL are more likely to relate in positive and inclusive ways with their classmates who experience emotional and behavioural problems. [10] A strong body of evidence demonstrates that well-designed and well-facilitated SEL leads to improved mental and social health for students, and to improved academic outcomes compared to those in similar schools who are not provided this form of education. [9]

A substantial meta-analysis reviewed the findings from school-based SEL interventions provided for students from kindergarten through to Year 12. It reviewed 424 studies from 53 countries, involving over half a million students. [8] Results showed that in comparison with students in control schools, those who participated in the SEL interventions experienced significantly improved relationship skills, attitudes and social behaviours, as well as associated improvements in school climate and safety, peer relationships and academic attainment.

Similarly a meta-analysis of 82 research trials conducted in a range of national contexts found lasting positive effects when students were followed up between 1 to 3 years post SEL intervention, with benefits including improved social and emotional skills, attitudes and indicators of wellbeing evident regardless of students' race, socio-economic background or school location. [11]

Key Points: Social and emotional learning programs (SEL) teach young people the social, emotional, and relationship skills essential to everyday life. They:

- improve mental health
- are most effective when delivered with fidelity by classroom teachers as part of a whole-school approach
- are related to improved academic outcomes and improved social and mental health
- foster respectful and supportive peer relationships
- reduce rates of bullying and sexual and homophobic harassment.

A review of the content and methods used in SEL education has also found that it contributes to the prevention of youth suicide by reducing some of the key risk factors for suicidality. This review found that the 5 key SEL competencies – identified as self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness and relationship skills – reduce some of the major known risk factors for youth suicide, as well as feelings of hopelessness and anxiety. These competencies can also assist those who have experienced childhood sexual abuse to seek help and to use protective behaviours. [12]

The evidence suggests that SEL education fosters respectful and supportive peer relationships. It leads to reduced rates of bullying of students with diverse abilities, LGBTIQ+ students and students from marginalised ethnic and migrant backgrounds. It also reduces rates of sexual harassment and homophobic bullying. [7, 9, 13-15]

SEL can help students returning to school following exposure to emergencies, disasters and armed conflict. A review of SEL research trials conducted in these situations found that those receiving substantial SEL education showed improved psychological wellbeing and lower rates of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder compared to students in control schools. [16]

Figure 1: The high prevalence of mental disorders in young people indicates the importance of providing SEL

- Almost half of females (45.5%) aged 16 to 24 years and a third of males (32.4%) aged 16 to 24 years experienced a mental disorder in the last 12 months.
- 2 in 5 females (40.4%) aged 16 to 24 years experienced an anxiety disorder in the last 12 months.
- 1 in 2 people (50.3%) who described their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian or bisexual, or who used a different term like asexual, pansexual or queer, experienced an anxiety disorder in the last 12 months.
- Females with a mental disorder were more likely to have seen a health professional for their mental health than males (51.1% compared with 36.4%) [19].

What is Respectful Relationships Education?

Respectful relationships education (RRE) describes education which explicitly supports prevention of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is any form of violence targeting a person based on their gender or gender presentation. It includes any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological, financial, cultural or spiritual harm or suffering to someone. Studies show that those who experience any combination of bullying, racism or gender-based violence are more likely to be anxious, depressed, tired or feel worthless and they can find it difficult to participate fully at school. [20-23] Research shows that gender-based violence disproportionately affects women and girls and LGBTIQA+ people.

RRE builds awareness of the ways gender norms can limit people's interests, opportunities and life choices and how they can lead to the endorsement of discrimination and violence. Students develop an awareness of what respectful, equal and nonviolent relationships can look or sound like in different contexts. Students learn the skills people need to relate with others in respectful ways, to assert their rights to be respected and to seek help for themselves or others if subjected to discrimination or interpersonal violence. Effective approaches to prevention of gender-based violence teach the social skills needed for respectful relationships and foster awareness of human rights in relation to gender equality and freedom from discrimination and violence. They include a focus on the ways gender norms can lead to limiting and harmful outcomes, including functioning as drivers of gender-based violence. [24-29]

Figure 2: The prevalence of bullying and gender-based violence indicates need for investment in SEL and RRE

- About 56% of Year 4 students and 43% of Year 8 students were bullied monthly or weekly [30].
- On average, those Year 4 and Year 8 students who were bullied achieved lower scores in Trends in International Maths and Science Studies (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Studies (PIRLS) than children who were not. This indicates that there is a relationship between the average score achieved by children and the frequency of bullying [30].
- 54% of 13- to 18-year-old students reported witnessing verbal harassment of gender and sexuality diverse students at school [31].
- 22% of women and 6.1% of men have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 [32].
- 11% of women and 3.6% of men experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 [32].
- 1 in 4 women (23%) and 1 in 14 men (7.3%) have experienced violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15 [32].

What is consent education?

Consent education combines SEL, RRE and sexuality education. For younger children it includes an age-appropriate focus on what it can look or sound like to ask for permission or consent, to refuse permission or consent and to understand that consent can't be obtained by pressuring people to do something they don't want to do. [33] It also includes learning activities that support prevention of child sexual abuse, via teaching about bodily autonomy, body boundaries, the difference between 'safe' and 'unsafe' secrets and the importance of seeking help from trusted adults if their 'early warning signals' are sending a message that they might not be safe. Research shows significant knowledge gains and improved self-protective behaviours occurs when students are taught their rights to be safe from abuse and their right to say no or to tell, even when someone in authority over them abuses them. A review of 24 child sexual abuse prevention programs showed that they increased the knowledge students have about abuse prevention and improved their skills in protective behaviours. [34] This review of studies found no evidence that the programs increased anxiety or fear in students.

For older students, consent education focuses on 'affirmative consent' within relationships. This includes understanding what is meant by affirmative consent, how to have respectful consent conversations and how to resist, report or seek help if experiencing or witnessing coercion or gender-based violence. [33]

Key Points

- Respectful Relationships Education (RRE) explicitly addresses the prevention of gender-based violence.
- Gender-based violence is any form of violence targeting a person because of their gender or gender presentation.
- Consent education includes a focus on what it can look or sound like to ask for, give, refuse or withdraw consent, and on understanding that consent is permission freely given with full knowledge of a situation and without pressure or manipulation.

Why include a focus on gender norms and stereotypes?

The RRRR resource provides an age-appropriate and research-informed approach to teaching about the ways gender norms can lead to harmful or limiting outcomes. It includes activities which focus on understanding every person's rights to respect, to bodily autonomy and to protection from violence within their relationships with peers, families, schools and society. It teaches them about their rights to be free from discrimination and how to seek help if affected by violence at school, home, online or in the community.

This approach is important because international studies have found that the key drivers of gender-based violence at a population level include gender-inequitable social norms and gender-inequitable, violence-endorsing constructions of masculinity. [35] For example, an international study of the cultural roots of gender-based violence in 12 European countries found that violence and discrimination against women was more common in societies where rigid gender roles were the norm, where male honour was protected and where those who challenged traditional gender roles were punished with violence. [36]. Additionally, an Australian study showed that the strongest predictors of attitudes conducive to violence against women held by young people aged 16 to 24 included:

- holding attitudes that endorse gender inequality
- having a low level of understanding of how violence is enacted upon women
- holding prejudicial attitudes towards others on the basis of their disability, ethnicity, Aboriginality or sexual orientation
- endorsing violence as a practice in other aspects of their lives. [37]

Conforming to gender norms can also have implications for a person's health as behaviours considered to be normative or desirable for a particular gender may be associated with negative health outcomes. For example, gendered beliefs related to masculinity may include the denial of vulnerability or weakness and tolerance of displays of aggressive behaviour. [38] These gender norms can lead to higher rates of violence, engagement in risky behaviour and reluctance to seek help in relation to mental health. [39, 40] Gender norms related to femininity and pressures to meet expected beauty standards can lead to augmented rates of body image distress, [41] and internalisation of the expectation that violence against women is excusable in certain circumstances. Morbidity and mortality data which shows different health and illness patterns for men and women illustrates the harmful impacts of gender norms. [42] Masculinity researchers argue that it is important to normalise positive expressions of masculinity which support young people to challenge micro forms of interpersonal violence, such as name-calling, sexist jokes and homophobic slurs. [43]

Our Watch provides a summary of available evidence about the nature and prevalence of gender-based violence in Australia, along with discussion of effective approaches to prevention. [44] The analysis conducted by Our Watch notes that gendered drivers of violence against women include:

- attitudes condoning violence against women
- men's control of decision-making and limits to independence in public and private life
- rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
- male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

Their framework for action emphasises the importance of a whole-of-society approach to challenging these negative attitudes and associated behaviours, along with efforts to strengthen positive relationships between men and women. [44]

Positive effects of RRE

Studies show that well-designed and well-implemented school-based classroom interventions addressing violence prevention and respectful relationships can produce change in attitudes and behaviours. [45-47] Providing explicit RRE to all students is a key part of a whole-school approach to preventing gender-based violence. [48]

Research suggests the complexity of gender-based violence requires a significant number of sessions to change behaviour and have lasting effects. [49] Research also shows that 'one-off' sessions are both inappropriate and inadequate. While there is no agreed upon minimum exposure, [50] there is consensus that RRE which provides greater intensity and duration has greater potential to produce behavioural change. [48] Further, the research investigating best practice demonstrates the benefits of a sustained approach across multi-session interventions. [46, 47]

Key Points

- The gendered drivers of violence against women include rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity, men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence, male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression dominance and control, and condoning of violence against women
- Conforming to narrow gender norms can lead to negative health outcomes, including those associated with increased risk-taking and use of violence on the part of men and boys, and increased levels of anxiety about body image for girls and young women.
- School-based interventions addressing violence prevention and respectful relationships can produce change in attitudes and behaviours when taught in a sustained way as part of a whole school approach to preventing gender-based violence.

Why commence RRE in primary school?

Research shows that SEL and RRE must commence from an early age, as children are well aware of gender norms and make efforts to fit within gendered expectations by the time they are in kindergarten. [51] As young children learn about gender, they can acquire and exhibit stereotypical, prejudiced and often negative attitudes towards those that they perceive as 'others'. [51-55] For example, they may insist that some games are for boys while others are for girls, thereby actively rejecting peers from certain games. This means that it is important to commence work on building positive gender relationships within these early years. Classroom activities can be used to help children to explore gender identity, challenge stereotypes, learn to value and show respect for diversity and difference and to learn how to apply these attitudes within respectful relationships.

Why provide RRE across the secondary school years?

The prevention of gender-based violence becomes increasingly important as students enter their high school years. Australian studies have found that around a third of young people aged 14 to 18 years who had been in a relationship had experienced some form of intimate partner abuse, with girls almost three times as likely to report sexual victimisation in their relationships as boys. [56]

Other studies have shown that bullying and harassment becomes a more gendered and sexualised practice among adolescents. [13, 14] Bullying can function as a mechanism through which some boys assert their dominance by policing and punishing those who are deemed to be insufficiently masculine, as well engaging in sexual harassment of girls as a way to establish status in the eyes of other boys. [24] Longitudinal research studies have investigated the pathway from bullying in early adolescence (ages 11 to 13) to perpetration of sexual violence in high school (at ages 14 to 18). Studies in the US context have shown that those who engage in homophobic name-calling in early adolescence were more likely to perpetrate sexual violence in their high school years. Boys who bullied others in early middle school (ages 11 to 12) were more likely to engage in homophobic name-calling in late middle school (ages 12 to 13). Further, boys who reported greater bullying perpetration and higher use of homophobic name-calling were 6 times more likely to engage in sexual violence in high school.

Australian research investigating the use of the RRRR teaching and learning resource also found that those bullying others were also more likely to sexually bully others. [7] Further, this study of Year 7 and 9 students showed that students who engaged in these forms of bullying were more likely to befriend others who also did so and that friendship allegiances may play a role in reinforcing or rewarding such attitudes or behaviour. Additionally, this study showed that compared with boys at Year 7, boys at Year 9 were less likely to intervene if other boys in their class sexually harassed girls. They were less inclined to think this behaviour was unacceptable which indicates that there may be increasing normalisation or pressures to engage in gender-based violence as boys age into mid-adolescence.

This research highlights the importance of providing prevention education in primary school and continuing this investment in prevention education as students age through high school. It also highlights the importance of including a focus on the prevention of homophobic name-calling and bullying as part of this approach. [13]

Why use gender-inclusive approaches?

Along with women and girls, people of diverse gender sexuality experience higher rates of gender-based violence. For example, a study showed 54% of 13- to 18-year-old Australians have witnessed students with diverse experiences of gender and sexuality being harassed at school. [31] An inclusive approach to education for the prevention of gender-based violence includes a focus on challenging forms of discrimination and disadvantage based on the binary nature of gender norms, as well as those generated by dominant understandings of masculinity and femininity. [57]

Teaching protective behaviours to support prevention of child abuse

The term 'protective behaviours' refers to behaviours which enable children to recognise and respond to situations where their personal space and sense of safety might be compromised. Programs that increase awareness, knowledge and protective behaviour skills aim to prevent and reduce child abuse and violence by making children feel safer to disclose inappropriate sexual advances. [58]

Research shows that school based abuse prevention programs for early childhood and primary school children are effective in increasing student knowledge and protective behaviours. [58-60] Components of successful programs include teaching children to identify and resist inappropriate touching, reassuring children that it is not their fault if they experience abuse and learning the proper names of genitals. [58] Research highlights that programs are more likely to be successful if they use behavioural skills training sfuch as active rehearsal through role-play followed by shaping and reinforcement, rather than passive learning (e.g. watching the teacher model skills or viewing a film). [58-60] Programs teaching about gender-based violence should include a focus on protective behaviours and provide developmentally-appropriate information and skill-building activities.

The importance of a whole-school approach

Research investigating school-based wellbeing promotion programs highlights the importance of positioning classroom interventions within a whole-school approach when addressing positive student behaviour, [61] SEL, resilience and mental health, [62-65] bullying prevention [66-69] and RRE [7, 29, 70].

A whole-school approach includes a focus on school policies, practices and partnerships with communities and agencies, as well provision of classroom-based curriculum. It is difficult to effect change in student attitudes or behaviour without use of a classroom intervention within a broader school approach [65, 71]. Stronger outcomes are evident when classroom-focused programs are combined with cross-curricular integration, a focus on classroom and school climate and active engagement of parents and carers, service providers and the local community. [72]

Clear messaging which promotes gender equality and identifies the unacceptability of harassment and perpetration of gender-based violence has been found to reduce rates of sexual harassment in schools. [73] Further, students are more likely to report homophobic harassment of peers to their teachers in schools where students have positive relationships with their teachers. [6] Inclusive and supportive teacher–student relationships play a pivotal role in shaping the school environment for gender-diverse students. [31]

Where does the RRRR resource fit within the school curriculum?

The teaching and learning activities provided in the RRRR resource align with the Victorian Curriculum. They address content descriptions and aspects of the achievement standards in both Health and Physical Education and Personal and Social Capability.

Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum integration table

The Victorian HPE curriculum [74]

The Health and Physical Education curriculum will support students to:

- access, evaluate and synthesise information so that they can make informed choices and act to enhance and advocate for their own and others' health, wellbeing, safety, and participation in physical activity across their lifespan
- develop and use physical, social, psychological and cognitive skills and strategies to promote self-identity and wellbeing, and to build and manage respectful relationships
- acquire, apply and evaluate movement skills, concepts and strategies to respond confidently, competently and creatively in various physical activity settings
- engage in and enjoy regular movement-based learning experiences and understand and appreciate their significance to personal, social, cultural, environmental and health practices and outcomes
- engage in and create opportunities for regular physical activity, as individuals and for the communities to which they belong, which can enhance fitness, movement performance and wellbeing
- analyse how varied and changing personal and contextual factors shape both our health and physical activity.

HPE focus areas

Within the HPE curriculum there is a focus on developing the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to promote respectful relationships and safety. These focus areas provide the context for teaching about respectful and safe relationships:

- **Relationships and sexuality (RS)**
  Relationships and sexuality addresses physical, social and emotional changes that occur over time, and the significant role that relationships, identities and sexuality play in these changes. Students learn how to establish and manage respectful relationships, and how to develop positive and respectful practices regarding their reproductive and sexual health. In doing so, students gain an understanding of the contextual factors that influence gender and sexual identities. Students also explore contextual factors that influence relationships and sexuality.
  The focus from Foundation to Level 2 should be on relationships
- **Safety (S)**
  Safety addresses safety issues that students may encounter in their daily lives. Students explore the way contextual factors affect their own safety and that of others. They learn to evaluate their local environments (both physical and social) and develop the understandings and skills needed to navigate these. This includes different settings, including school, home, roads, outdoors, sports clubs, near and in water, parties and online. Students will develop skills in first aid, and in negotiating relationships, personal safety and uncomfortable situations.

HPE strand: Personal, Social and Community Health

The **Personal, Social and Community Health** strand contains the following themes:

- **Identities and change**
  - The development of personal identity, including gender and sexual identity
  - The influence of gender stereotypes on developing respectful relationships
- **Interacting with others**
  - The development of personal and social skills necessary for respectful relationships
  - Exploring emotional responses and how these affect relationships
  - Skills and strategies required to seek, give or deny consent respectfully
- **Contributing to healthy communities**
  - Examining and evaluating health information, services and messaging that influences health and wellbeing decisions and behaviours (including relationships) in the community, and the influence this has on individual attitudes and actions. This includes a focus on physical and social environments and taking action that can help challenge attitudes and behaviours such as homophobia, sexism, prejudice, violence, discrimination and harassment
  - Providing opportunities to practise protective behaviours and help-seeking strategies

Source: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2024 Victorian Curriculum Health and Physical Education accessed from https://f10.vcaa.vic.edu.au/learning-areas/health-and-physical-education/introduction

Personal and Social Capability [75]

The Personal and Social Capability curriculum aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills which can enable students to:

- recognise, understand and evaluate the expression of emotions
- demonstrate an awareness of their personal qualities and the factors that contribute to resilience
- develop empathy for others and recognise the importance of supporting diversity for a cohesive community
- consider how relationships are developed and use interpersonal skills to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- work effectively in teams and develop strategies to manage challenging situations constructively.

Source: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2015, Victorian Curriculum: Personal and Social Capability, accessed from http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/personal-and-social-capability/introduction/rationale-and-aims

Effective implementation

The RRRR resource uses a range of collaborative learning strategies which provide opportunities for students to develop social skills. These strategies also engage explicitly with the key content areas of emotional literacy, decision-making, problem-solving, positive self-regard, stress management, positive coping, help-seeking and peer support. The lessons incorporate a range of collaborative learning activities such as paired sharing, small group problem-solving discussions, scenario-based discussions, skills-development exercises, role-plays, storytelling, games, experiential activities and class discussions.

Collaborative learning activities are a key tool for engaging students in critical thinking about the ways certain gender norms and power relations work to legitimise violence and discrimination. [76] The collaborative activities also provide students with an opportunity to develop their social skills. A systematic review of 69 other resources further supported this form of peer-to-peer engagement. [42] It found that attitudes were positively influenced by interventions that used collaborative learning to orchestrate peer-to-peer dialogue, positioned peers as contributors, developed skills for peer relationships, invited positive peer role-modelling and used student voice to inform design and content. Despite these findings, the use of collaborative learning is not the norm in many classrooms, [77] with teachers defaulting to more individualised or teacher-centric forms of instruction, including when providing RRE. [7]

Research investigating the use of the RRRR resource showed that teachers may face a number of challenges affecting their capacity to implement with fidelity, including a combination of emotional, political and pedagogical labour. [1] Emotional labour relates to teacher concerns that learning about gender-based violence may be distressing for students and staff who have experienced gender-based violence or family violence. Political labour is the work needed to manage resistance or backlash by students, parents, carers or community members who are opposed to the use of gender-inclusive approaches or approaches that challenge traditional patriarchal norms. Pedagogical labour is the work associated with facilitating collaborative learning activities, with some teachers citing lack of confidence in managing student behaviour during peer-to-peer tasks.

The research also identified the need for 'structures for care', which are the kinds of structures that supported effective implementation of the RRRR resource. [2] These included providing a designated space in the school timetable, strong leadership support, opportunities to participate in professional learning and to work in school-based teams that provide collegial support and guidance. Teachers also validated the importance of proactive wellbeing and curriculum policy within the education system and their access to the research-informed teaching resources used to guide their approach.

Key Points

- The RRRR resource aligns with the Victorian Curriculum.
- Effecting change in student attitudes or behaviour requires dedicated RRE as part of a whole-school approach.
- A whole-school approach includes a focus on school policies, practices and partnerships with communities and agencies, as well provision of classroom-based curriculum.
- Collaborative learning activities are essential for engaging students in critical thinking and for the development of social skills.

Teacher professional preparedness and support

Teachers who are new to leadership or delivering RRE may benefit from engaging in professional learning and working with colleagues to consider their approach to using the resource. Some schools may elect to use a co-delivery or co-teaching model.

For some teachers, leading activities which include discussions about gender-based violence and discrimination may trigger memories of personal experience. It is advised that teachers consider whether they need wellbeing support before using the resource and whether they would benefit from discussing their needs directly with a trusted senior colleague, counsellor or the principal. Teachers may also find it helpful to work with colleagues to prepare and rehearse delivery of the program, to co-teach with a colleague or to have a colleague lead particular sessions.

There are a range of counselling and help services available for teachers who want to access support in relation to issues associated with mental wellbeing, family violence or experiences of gender-based violence. The following Department of Education resources are available to school staff:

- Family Violence Support resources: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/family-violence-support/resources
- LGBTIQA+ section of the Inclusive Workplaces policy and guidelines page: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/inclusive-workplaces/policy-and-guidelines/lgbtiq
- Mental Health and Wellbeing – Employees policy: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/mental-health-and-wellbeing-employees/policy

All department staff – including school, regional and corporate staff and their immediate family members (aged 18 years and over) – can also access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This free, confidential counselling service, provided by mental health professionals, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The EAP also offers access to specialist counsellors for Aboriginal, LGBTIQA+ and family violence matters.

- To access the EAP, call 1300 361 008 or use the link to the live chat function on the Mental Health and Wellbeing – Employees resources page to make a booking: https://wellbeing.lifeworks.com/au/.

Setting up a safe social space

It is important for teachers to work with students to set up a 'safe social space' for participation and learning. This means establishing a friendly and respectful atmosphere where students and teachers feel safe to share their views without fear of judgement or silencing. It is important to set out the expectations that groups will work together, mix with each other and encourage each other to participate. It is important to make these expectations clear so that everybody is aware of them and then involve students in building class agreements. Some classes will have pre-established ground rules or agreements for a respectful learning environment. However, other groups may be together for the first time. If this is the case, it is important to establish classroom agreements around behaviour because they provide a structure that helps students and staff to feel safe and supported, facilitate classroom management and ensure the class works effectively. Within the resource, there are specific introductory activities provided that suggest approaches to involving students in rule making and setting up a safe learning space.

If a comment is made that leaves other students feeling targeted, angry or offended, it is important that these comments are not ignored. Ignoring sexist or other inappropriate comments can have the effect of communicating implicit teacher approval. Name the inappropriate behaviour and request what is expected in its place, modelling the sort of behaviour that is required. Arrange a follow-up conversation with students who repeatedly engage in this behaviour to support them to develop their interpersonal skills.

Providing a safe social space also involves setting standards about privacy. This includes being clear about what is appropriate to share in the group space and what should be disclosed in a more private setting, such as between a student and a teacher or wellbeing leader (further coaching on this is provided below). The lessons and activities do not require students or staff to disclose their own experiences, which may not be appropriate in the public space of the classroom. Rather it uses the notion of protective distancing, providing generic examples and scenarios as the focus for the learning activities. There may be times when the teacher needs to remind students about privacy, or to use the technique of 'protective interrupting' if they think a student is about to make an inappropriately timed disclosure. The teacher can then follow up with the student to discuss the issue and to arrange for further support if appropriate.

It is recommended that teachers notify the relevant wellbeing staff prior to delivering these lessons, as there may be an increase in help-seeking or peer referral as students engage with the content. The symbol and text below will accompany classes that may prompt help-seeking and require further action from teachers.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance https://www.vic.gov.au/protect and Four Critical Actions https://www.schools.vic.gov.au/report-child-abuse-schools if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.

Lessons within the resource that address content that relates directly or indirectly to harm or abuse are identified with the icon above.

Teaching sensitive material

Some of the learning activities in this resource deal with sensitive topics like violence, racism, discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. Some students may have direct experience of these issues. Content advice should be provided to support the wellbeing of those students prior to and within lessons identified by these icons:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Parents and carers should also be informed in advance that students will be exploring sensitive content, and contacted where appropriate if their child has sought wellbeing support.

Teachers should advise students that in an upcoming session they will focus on sensitive content, being specific about what that means. For example, by saying, 'In an upcoming session we will be considering/exploring/discussing bullying or sexual violence.' Remind students about class ground rules or agreements about respectful behaviour.

Let students know that it's okay to feel uncomfortable and that if they think they'll find any of the content distressing, they can read the lesson content in advance, choose not to participate in activities or leave the room as appropriate.

Be proactive about having conversations with students prior to the class and facilitate student choices in an inconspicuous manner. Support students to make choices about their participation during the lesson. Consider using a 'Talk to a teacher' slip for classes with sensitive content, which gives students the opportunity to anticipate their preferences before a class begins. If used, care should be taken to ensure that the slips are protected from misuse, loss and unauthorised disclosure.

Key Points

It's important to:

- Establish classroom agreements that help students and staff feel to safe and respected.
- Notice, name and address sexist or inappropriate behaviour, utilising classroom agreements and school codes of conduct.
- Be clear about what is appropriate to share in a group space and what is better suited to a private setting
- Provide content advice and help-seeking reminders to support the wellbeing of students when engaging with sensitive material prior to and at the beginning of lessons.

Teachers should also be aware of and follow their school's policy on yard duty and the supervision of students. Teachers can access the Department of Education's resource on these policies and review their duty of care obligations when considering alternative participation arrangements for students. See the Department of Education's website for more information on:

- Supervision of Students: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supervision-students/policy
- Duty of Care: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/duty-of-care/policy

Students who exit the classroom must be referred to school wellbeing support. Once the lesson has concluded, follow your school's wellbeing processes to check in with students who have modified their participation to ensure they have access to support if required.

For further information on department polices relating to the care, health, safety and wellbeing of students visit the Department of Education's duty of care resource listed above.

Note that the learning activities which engage with sensitive material do not invite students to share their own stories in front of their peers. Rather, these are structured around scenarios which provide a focus on what affected parties can do to seek help and what concerned others can do to provide peer support or peer referral. Teachers are advised to observe, enquire, support, monitor, follow up and refer if they notice signs that a student may be finding the material distressing or unsettling.

Some teachers may worry that talking about violence could have negative effects for those who have experienced violence. [1] However, teachers can use strategies to make discussions about violence prevention protective and productive. In addition to carefully constructed learning activities and the use of scenarios rather than personal stories, teachers can also shift the focus by using more celebratory or playful learning activities when required. These more playful activities can re-introduce a positive mood and create a sense of inclusion and connectedness to others. These activities are designed to assist students to explore the issues in a blame-free environment. They support students to question harmful attitudes and practices without resorting to blaming or naming and without needing to call on their personal stories. [28] Nonetheless, some of the material in the resource may trigger sad or angry emotions in students or teachers themselves. Some students may react defensively and show discomfort by laughing, joking, accusing or denying the existence or effects of gender-based violence. In this case teachers can use a combination of positive classroom management practices to deal with any potentially unruly or belittling behaviour and provide additional support or referral for those finding the material difficult.

Disclosure of bullying, family violence and sexual abuse can increase during or following provision of SEL and RRE, with some disclosures or help-seeking requests made to educators and other students turning to helplines. [78] Given this likelihood, is important that protocols and pathways for teacher response are clearly established in advance, that wellbeing staff are made aware of the timing of delivery and that students are also provided with information about school supports and trusted external help-sources that they may access by phone or online.

Supporting the Child Safe Standards

Victoria's Child Safe Standards were introduced to further strengthen child safe environments and better protect children from abuse. The Child Safe Standards make sure children and young people in organisations including schools and early childhood settings feel safe and are safe.

The Department of Education's PROTECT guidance helps schools and early childhood services implement the Child Safe Standards. The website includes guidance, policies and templates to support schools to revise their child safety policies and practices to meet the requirements of the Child Safe Standards. For further information on PROTECT guidance visit:

- PROTECT guidance: https://www.vic.gov.au/protect

Delivering the lessons in the RRRR resource sequentially, with fidelity and as part of a whole-school approach to RRE contributes to schools' implementation of the Child Safe Standards. For further information about the Child Safe Standards visit:

- Schools – guidance page: https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-schools-guidance

Teacher-initiated conversations following possible signs of distress

Research shows that young people can find it difficult to seek help, particularly if experiencing mental health problems or exposure to violence. [79-81] Given this, it is important that staff initiate follow-up conversations with students who are expressing or showing signs of distress.

A follow-up conversation is best conducted in a safe environment, to avoid stigmatising or embarrassing students. In addition, it's important to:

- remain calm during a follow-up conversation
- let the student know you want to check in on how they are
- use active listening skills and open questions to allow the student to tell their story
- listen attentively, without interrupting or making judgement
- thank them for trusting you with their disclosure, reassure them that telling you was the right thing to do and that they will be believed and taken seriously
- validate and believe the student and don't interrogate their experience or behaviour
- remind the student that you need to make sure they are safe and that they receive the help they need. This might involve you talking to others to help get the right people involved to give this help and expertise
- reassure the student that there are things that can be done to help in situations like theirs and that you will arrange to follow up so a plan can be made. Let students know the next set of actions.

Key Points

- It's important to initiate follow-up conversations with students expressing or showing signs of distress.
- The Department of Education's PROTECT guidance includes strategies for managing a disclosure. School staff must follow the Four Critical Actions where there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse.

Teachers can respect students' needs for privacy and protection by referring matters to the wellbeing leader or school principal in ways that are discreet. However, teachers may be required to share information with others if they believe a student is at risk of harm. Some disclosures will require a mandatory reporting response. This should be done in a way that ensures protection of the child during and after the notification process. For further guidance on helping students to understand that you may need to seek assistance for them and cannot keep a discussion or disclosure confidential, visit:

- Report child abuse in schools: https://www.schools.vic.gov.au/report-child-abuse-schools#disclosures-from-a-student

The PROTECT guidance includes strategies for managing a disclosure. School staff must follow the Four Critical Actions where there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. These actions outline who an incident, disclosure or suspicion should be reported to. When dealing with an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, staff should ensure that the principal and school leadership team is made aware of the concern and are involved in providing ongoing appropriate support. For more information about the Four Critical Actions, visit:

- Four Critical Actions: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/report.aspx

Dealing with resistance and backlash

Schools may encounter some resistance or backlash in response to teaching about gender equality and gender diversity. The terms 'resistance' and 'backlash' are sometimes used interchangeably to describe a commonly occurring response where members of advantaged groups push back against social justice initiatives which they perceive to threaten their privileged position, beliefs or world view. [82]

Resistance is a response to actual or perceived challenges to existing hierarchies of power. It is a reaction against progressive social change that seeks to prevent further change from happening and reverse those changes already achieved. A typical feature of backlash is the desire by some proponents to return to aspects of an idealised past in which structural inequality was normalised. [82]

Alongside and in response to advances in global and national efforts to address gender equality and prevent gender-based against women, girls and LGBTIQA+ people, there has been ongoing backlash and resistance. Some who oppose this form of education have been influenced by misinformation and false claims about the aims, methods and content of teaching and learning resources. [83] Consequently, they may hold fears about supposed negative outcomes and fear that this will distract from more 'academic' subjects. Additionally, they may be unaware of the research that shows that education addressing social and emotional learning, human rights, violence prevention, gender equality and inclusion is associated with positive outcomes in students' attitudes and behaviour as well as advances in their academic attainment. Effective communication about the objectives and methods of SEL and RRE may help to allay such concerns. [83]

Australian teachers also observed that some students have adopted standpoints held by prominent social media influencers1 who have actively argued the legitimacy of misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic and racist views. [7] A survey conducted with over 1,300 young men in Australia in late 2022 investigated the influence of one prominent influencer [84] The 1,374 respondents were chiefly students from Years 8 to 10 who participated in a survey following a masculinity workshop conducted by external providers at their school. The researchers found that 92% of respondents were familiar with the influencer's content and 25% of these respondents looked up to him as a role model. Of the other students surveyed, 31% were neutral and 44% disagreed that they look up to him as a role model. Some described him as a confident, hardworking and successful inspiration or noted that they agreed with his opinions such as, 'He tells men that they matter and women are only trying to put you down to be stronger than you.' Those who did not look up to the influencer as a role model tended to describe him using terms like 'arrogant' and 'misogynist'.

1 At the time this research was undertaken, Andrew Tate was one example of a widely followed social media influencer who combined motivational and lifestyle videos with strongly misogynistic and homophobic views. Source: 84. The Man Cave, Who is Andrew Tate and why do young men relate to him?, in What's really going on with young men? Edition 3. 2023, The Man Cave: Melbourne..

Understanding the ways resistance and backlash can present in schools

Resistance and backlash to gender equality can be expressed in a number of ways, including denial of the problem, disavowal of responsibility, inaction, appeasement, cooption and repression. Resistance may be individual or collective, formal or informal [82, 85, 86]. In schools, these forms of response may be expressed by students, staff, parents and carers or community members.

Resistance and backlash examples

Resistance and backlash in the classroom may sound like:
• **Rejecting** the underpinning human rights principles by refuting notions of gender equality and inclusion, endorsing discrimination and violence or advocating racist, misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic viewpoints.
• **Offending** via use of discriminatory gestures or nicknames, deadnaming, posting offensive images or statements, making sexist/homophobic/transphobic remarks, engaging in forms of sexual harassment.
• **Condoning** forms of discrimination by laughing along when others make sexist/misogynistic/homophobic/transphobic remarks.
• **Excusing** the discriminatory behaviour as natural, harmless, friendly or as a right to free speech, with phrases like, 'they're only joking', 'it's harmless flirting', 'everyone says it', 'they know we don't mean it', 'they do it too', 'they're entitled to their beliefs about women/gay/transgender people' and so on.
• **Denying** that the problem exists by minimising its extent, significance and impact and claiming victimisation is equal for all parties, with phrases like 'we all get along here', 'men are victims too', 'that data is old', 'it's not like that now', 'it doesn't happen around here, so it is not relevant for us' and so on.
• **Reversing** the story by denying privilege and adopting a victim position, claiming reverse discrimination.
• **Blaming** the problem on those who are victimised, with phrases like 'she was asking for it', 'they can't take a joke', 'they deserve it', 'they bring it on themselves' and with the endorsement of date rape myths.
• **Blocking** the learning activities by interrupting, talking over, refusing to participate in activities or with certain students, denigrating the contributions of other students.
• **Undermining** the credibility of the teacher or demeaning their approach, with phrases like 'they can't control the class', or 'she is always blaming the guys' and so on.

Forms of backlash that may be expressed by adults (as parents or carers or in the broader community):
Attacking the morality of RRE on the basis that the approach is supposedly immoral, untruthful or harmful.
Misrepresenting RRE by actively spreading misinformation or disinformation about its objectives or methods.
Proclaiming they have rights to endorse or perpetuate discriminatory treatment.
Accusing the school of harmful treatment, demeaning the moral character of the staff.
Threatening or berating staff, students, other parents and carers, advocacy groups or service providers.
For more detailed discussion on resistance and backlash see: Flood, M., Dragiewicz, M., & Pease, B. (2021). Resistance and backlash to gender equality. The Australian journal of social issues, 52, 593–408. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.137 Our Watch (2022) Understanding, monitoring and responding to resistance and backlash. Melbourne, Respect Victoria and Our Watch. https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/understanding-backlash-and-resistance VicHealth 2018, (En)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne. https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Encountering-Resistance-Gender-Equality.pdf

Responding to student expressions of hate speech

Research shows that there is a close association between witnessing hate speech and using hate speech. A school-based study showed that negative peer modelling is associated with the use of hate speech, with students who are encouraged by peers to participate in such practices being more likely to do so. The study also found that in contrast, students are less likely to use hate speech if their peers or teachers call it out as unacceptable. [87] It is important therefore that educators respond to hate speech by making it clear that this behaviour is unacceptable and that no one should be harassed at school, online or anywhere else.

Key Points

Resistance and backlash to gender equality can be expressed in a number of ways, including victim blaming, denial of the problem, disavowal of responsibility, inaction, excusing or condoning discriminatory behaviour, citing myths as facts, and verbal or physical aggression.

In schools, resistance and backlash may be expressed by students, staff, parents, carers or community members.

Effective communication about the objectives and methods of SEL and RRE, and the research demonstrating its positive impact on student wellbeing and behaviour, may help to support understanding of its positive outcomes for students.

Don't ignore the behaviour, even if the student claims they are only joking or if a member of the target group is not present. Other students may interpret a teacher's choice to ignore this behaviour to mean that the teacher doesn't think it's serious enough to warrant a response, or that staff members will not defend the right all students have to be treated with respect.

Useful steps when teachers respond to behaviours of this nature include:

1. Interrupt the student/s to stop the behaviour.
2. Name the behaviour (for example, 'That is a racist/homophobic/sexist statement').
3. State that it is against the school rules and/or against the law (for example, 'That is against the right to respect rule we have at this school').
4. State that it is a behaviour that has harmful effects (for example, 'That kind of racist/sexist/homophobic talk has harmful effects. It is not to happen again').
5. Identify the follow-up actions (for example, 'I will talk with you further about this after class/ You will sit over here, and write an account of what you did, which rule it breaks and what you will do differently next time').
6. Work with students who have experienced hate speech to investigate further and ensure appropriate supports are in place.

Further investigation and comprehensive follow up is required to address continuing, serious, repeated or habitual behaviours.

For advice on use of strategies to support school-wide approaches positive behaviour see the student behaviour resources on the Department of Education's website.

- Student behaviour policy: https:/www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy
- Student behaviour guidance: https:/www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/guidance/5-school-wide-positive-behaviour-support-swpbs-framework

See also the Department of Education's guidance on responding to racist bullying, advice for supporting the inclusion of LGBTIQA+ students and the policy informing support for students with disability.

- Racist bullying: https://www.vic.gov.au/racist-bullying
- Support for LGBTIQA+ students: https:/www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy
- Support for students with a disability: https:/www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy

Parents and carers as partners

Parents and carers are a child's first and most important teachers, particularly in relation to teaching core values and key social and emotional skills. The RRRR resource encourages students to talk with parents, carers, Elders and family members about what they are learning within, with 'talking further' tasks at the end of each topic area to suggest ways that teachers can encourage this communication.

Parents and carers also appreciate knowing about the strategies schools are using to foster respectful relationships and development of the personal and social capabilities. Schools can assist by sharing the learning intentions from the lessons and providing examples of the kinds of activities that students are engaging with. Student contributions to the design and co-delivery of parent workshops and presentations can be used to foster a dynamic exchange. Schools may also find it effective to share information via newsletters, displays and open days.

For further guidance on frameworks and tools to inform effective partnerships between families, school and community refer to:

- Respectful Relationships: A Resource Kit for Victorian Schools: https://fusecontent.education.vic.gov.au/cfee82ef-67f8-488c-a167-52759afda882/respectfulrelationshipsresourceakitforvictorianschools.pdf
- Child Safe Standard 4: Families and Communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing: https://www.health.vic.gov.au/childsafestandards
- Supporting Family-School-Community partnerships for Learning: https://www.education.gov.au/supporting-family-school-community-partnerships-learning

Level 3-4 Resource

Introductory activities

Aims

Activities will assist students to:

- learn simple rules and agreements they need to support a safe and friendly learning environment in their class.

Informed by the evidence base

Building a shared set of expectations and protective routines can contribute to the social wellbeing of the class. Healthy groups develop common understandings about how to work well with each other. Involving students in naming the actions they can take to help create a safe and happy class can help build a shared sense of responsibility for the social wellbeing of the class. A strong sense of connectedness or belonging to school is a protective factor for children and young people.[1, 2] Students also benefit from activities that help them to develop friendships, as forming and maintaining positive relationships with peers can be one of the most challenging aspects of school life.[3]

Equipment

- Room to move
- Soft toy or object to pass around (optional)

Method

Activity 1: A name game

1. Ask students to sit in a circle. Explain that they will play a game to practise each other's names. Go around the circle and ask everyone to say their name: 'I am [name] and I enjoy [activity].' (For example, 'I am Gabriela and I enjoy riding my bike.')

   When each person says their name, everyone will respond by saying the name together with a greeting: 'Hello [name] who enjoys [activity].' (For example, 'Hello Gabriela, who enjoys riding a bike.')

   Demonstrate this with the class, using your own name first and one of your preferred activities.

2. Reinforce the importance of using friendly ways to greet each other, like saying hello, and by using someone's name, and the importance of getting to know people by understanding what their interests are or what they enjoy.

3. Optional extras to assist with learning names, and practising welcoming routines:

   - Pass a soft toy around the circle: students say their name when they receive the toy. Everyone repeats this name together with a welcoming phrase like 'Good morning [name]' or 'Hello [name]'. The person with the toy then passes it to someone else in the class.
   - Add a simple physical activity to the naming ritual – for example, students stand in the circle and lift their arms high as they say their name. Then everyone echoes their name, while also raising their arms high as if in a big cheer.

Coaching point:
Welcoming routines. Simple and joyful welcoming routines can help students to feel connected to the class. Students benefit from feeling that not only their teacher, but also their peers, are pleased to see them. For a simpler set of introductory name games, refer to the Level 1–2 resource.

Activity 2: A getting-to-know-you game

1. Explain that we will play a talking game to help us get to know someone a little bit better. In this game, we aim to find 2 things we have in common (such as 2 foods we both like or 2 games we both like to play) and 2 ways that we are a bit different (like having a different place where we were born, or a different favourite colour). To make the game even more challenging, we have to find out things that you can't tell by just looking at each other. (For example, having the same or different hair colour or being the same or a different height.)

2. Explain to students that they will work in pairs (or if trios are needed, alert students that this can make the game a little more challenging). Point out that they will need to remember at least one thing so they can report this back to the class.

3. Demonstrate with a volunteer.
4. Pair students around the circle and set them to work to exchange this information.
5. Ask each person in each pair to report back the name of their partner, and one thing they learnt that was similar or different about them.

Coaching point:
Developing a safe social space. Activity 3 can be used to build a shared understanding of rules and expectations. Healthy groups develop common understandings about how to work well with each other. Invite students to suggest what will help everyone to feel safe and welcome in the classroom. Co-create class agreements that help to build a sense of respect and responsibility for the social wellbeing of everyone. Your classroom or school may already have rules like this in place as part of their approach to school-wide positive behaviour. Adapt the activity to suit your setting.

Activity 3: We help to make our class a good place for everyone

1. Invite students to name some actions to help make sure their class is a good place for everyone to learn well. Acknowledge and record contributions. (For example, 'encouraging each other to have a go', 'helping each other' or 'asking for help when you are not sure about something'.)
2. Ask students to name some additional actions that would help make the class a welcoming and happy place for everyone. Acknowledge and record contributions. Aim to re-frame any negative language, including by inviting students to name what the opposite might be. (For example, the opposite of 'don't be mean' could be 'be kind'.)
3. Sum up the activity by recording the positive actions that everyone can take to make the class work well for everyone. Aim to keep the list short and positive. For example:
   - We listen.
   - We are kind.
   - We try hard.
   - We take turns.
   - We help each other.
   - We encourage people to join in.
   - We check by asking: 'Can you please explain that again?', 'Are you okay?', 'Can I help?' 'Can I borrow this please?'
   - We let the teacher know if we are not feeling okay.
4. Seek agreement from everyone in the class that they will do their best to use these actions.
5. After the class, make a display or visual reminder of the key actions.
6. Reinforce these expectations regularly. This can be in the positive mode of 'catching their success' – providing positive feedback when you observe them fulfilling an action. You can also revisit expectations, using 'rule reminders' before any activities that might call for them.

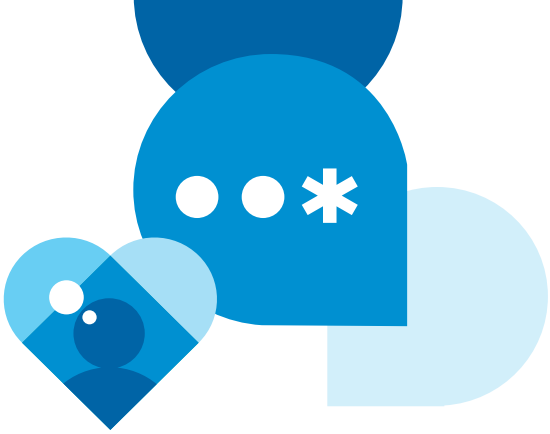
Coaching point:
Revisiting class agreements before teaching sensitive topics. It will be important to reconnect with class agreements or norms prior to delivery of more sensitive topics across the year. For further suggestions about strategies to support students to let you know when they are feeling distressed, see the guidance on content advice in the Introduction.

Review

Invite students to remind each other of some of the ideas they had about how to help make the class a safe and happy place for everyone.

Example of simple positive agreements

How we help to make our class a safe and happy place	
We try our best.	We listen to each other.
We are kind.	We take turns.
We ask if not sure.	We keep our bodies to ourselves.
We help each other.	We let the teacher know if we are not okay.
We encourage people to join in.	We treat people and things with care and respect.



Topic 01 Emotional literacy

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- describe the influence that people, situations and events can have on their emotions
- investigate how emotional responses may vary in intensity
- understand how to interact positively with others in different situations.

Informed by the evidence base

Building a shared set of expectations and protective routines can contribute to the social wellbeing of the class. Healthy groups develop common understandings about how to work well with each other. Involving students in naming the actions they can take to help create a safe and happy class can help build a shared sense of responsibility for the social wellbeing of the class. A strong sense of connectedness or belonging to school is a protective factor for children and young people.[1, 2] Students also benefit from activities that help them to develop friendships, as forming and maintaining positive relationships with peers can be one of the most challenging aspects of school life.[3]

Informed by the evidence base

Research shows that students who participate in rigorously designed and well-taught Social and Emotional Learning programs (SELs) demonstrate improved mental and social health, have improved relationships with peers, are less likely to engage in risky and disruptive behaviour, show improved academic outcomes and have improved capacity for help-seeking.[4-7] Participation in SELs also reduces rates of sexual harassment and homophobic bullying and leads to reduced rates of bullying of LGBTIQ+ students, students from marginalised ethnic and migrant backgrounds, and students with disability.[8-10]

A meta-analysis of 82 research trials conducted in a range of national contexts found lasting positive effects of social and emotional learning programs when students were followed up 1–3 years post-intervention, regardless of students' race, socio-economic background or school location.[7]

SELs have also been found to make a significant contribution in students returning to school after exposure to emergencies, disasters or armed conflict. Those receiving a substantial SEL program showed improved psychological wellbeing and lower rates of depression, anxiety and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than students in control schools.[11] The collaborative learning activities within these programs help students to build their social skills.[12]

A focus on developing emotional literacy provides an important foundation within social and emotional learning programs. Building a large vocabulary for emotions helps to increase emotional literacy, promote self-awareness and encourage empathy. Developing empathy has been found to be an effective tool in reducing bullying.[13] A study conducted with children who had been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder found that the process of matching images of facial expressions showing key emotions to pictures of situations that might elicit such an emotion led to improved understanding of their own and others' emotions, along with improved capacity to match their own emotions to certain situations.[14]

Coaching point:

Developing emotional literacy. Students will have different capabilities and competencies in emotional literacy. This is sometimes due to neurodiversity or to variations in vocabulary development, difficulty with empathising or picking up on the bodily cues of others, or expressing emotions if English is an additional language. It is important to point out that not only do people find it hard to think of words for some emotions, but they also find it hard to figure out what others are feeling and may not be able to guess correctly. Reassure students who find it difficult to identify emotions that it's okay to get confused or not to know, and provide positive feedback on participation. Suggest that one strategy might be to ask people how they feel, and check our guess with them.

Use teachable moments to make regular use of language for emotions, and to make transparent the ways people can empathise with others. (For example, 'I'm guessing from that frown that you are feeling a bit frustrated', or 'That big smile tells me that you might be excited about trying this', or 'The sound of that big sigh has me guessing you're really disappointed'.)

Provide visual cues to help students understand and remember the words for emotions. Display the images for reference, along with the matching word for the emotion. Visual cues can be particularly useful to support the engagement of diverse learners. As part of your use of interactive read-aloud strategies, continue to build emotional literacy when reading class texts, or engaging with other visual material, by asking students to guess and name emotions that characters might be experiencing. For guidance on using this strategy, refer to the Department of Education's Literacy Teaching Toolkit: **Interactive read alouds (education.vic.gov.au)** https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/speakinglistening/Pages/examplereadalouds.aspx

Topic 01

Activity 1: What do emotions look like?

Learning intentions

- Students will name a range of different emotions.
- Students will describe how their body might feel in response to certain emotions.
- Students will give examples of how body language can give clues about people's emotions.
- Students will practise ways to ask others about how they feel.

Coaching point:
Sharing learning intentions. Explicitly sharing the learning intentions will help you and the students to intentionally practise these skills during an activity and allow you to review the effectiveness of the lesson at its conclusion. This can assist students to understand the purpose behind the learning activities, and how this learning can contribute to their life.

Equipment

- 'Emotions' cards
- Drawing materials

Method

Part A: The Emotions Echo Game

1. Introduce the Emotions Echo Game. Explain that you will be the leader, and the class will work together to be 'the echo'. That means when you say something, they will 'echo' and mirror you, in unison, copying you as closely as they can with both body and voice. When you say the word, you will also make a simple movement or pose, which they will copy as well.

   You will say an emotion and make movements and expressions that suggest what the emotion feels like.

2. Play a few rounds of the game to introduce the key vocabulary about emotions that you plan to use in the lesson. Use opposites in sequence to build the context of positive or 'comfortable' emotions and negative or 'less comfortable' emotions that will be relevant in the lesson. For example: happy and sad, proud and embarrassed, excited and bored, and relieved and disappointed.
3. Invite some of the students to have a turn at saying a word and creating a pose for their peers to echo and mirror. Ask students to make suggestions about how they work out what emotions other people might be experiencing.
4. Introduce the term 'body language' to describe the way emotions are expressed through the body.

Part B: The Emotions Guessing Game

1. Explain that in the next activity students will work in groups to set up a guessing game for their classmates. Each group will design a freeze frame that shows a situation where someone might feel a certain emotion. The class will look at their freeze frame and guess the emotion that it represents.
2. Put students into groups of 3. Give each trio one 'emotions' card. They will work together to create a freeze frame that shows how people might look when they feel that emotion.
3. Gather in circle time and ask each group to present their freeze-frame. Ask the rest of the class to guess the emotion. Then ask the actors to announce their word and explain the design of their display.
4. Once all the freeze-frames have been shown, ask the class to identify which of the emotions shown were positive or comfortable emotions and which were negative, less comfortable or distressing emotions. As a follow-up, ask students to draw a picture with an accompanying caption (or sentences to describe the situation) where a person might feel a positive or comfortable emotion, and another picture plus text to describe a situation that may trigger a negative or uncomfortable emotion.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Invite students to consider why it might be important to be able to name our emotions and to recognise emotions in others.

Coaching point:
Using circle time for peer-supported learning. Sharing in circle time can help to build students' skills in listening respectfully and supportively to each other. It also provides opportunities for them to contribute to each other's learning. If students are each taking turns around the circle to speak, invite the previous person to call on the classmate next to them by name to speak next. Encourage students to thank each other for their contributions.

EMOTIONS CARDS

Excited	Delighted	Frustrated
Relieved	Surprised	Nervous
Happy	Lonely	Bored
Proud	Embarrassed	Disappointed

Topic 01

Activity 2: Emotional triggers

Learning intention

- Students will name emotions that they may feel in response to different situations.

Equipment

- 'Emotions' cards (copy from Activity 1)
- 'Which emotions might you feel in this situation?' template
- Pens and pencils or digital devices

Method

1. Organise for students to work in pairs or trios. Display or provide each group with a set of the 'Which emotions might you feel in this situation?' template and 'Emotions' cards.
2. Students should discuss which emotions a person might feel in response to each of the situations, and write these words next to the statement. If they think of different emotions for the same situation, encourage them to record more than one emotion.
3. Once the task is complete, give each group a chance to report back on one or 2 of their answers.

Review

Review the learning intentions, inviting students to reflect on and justify how well they were able to identify the positive, comfortable feelings and the negative, less comfortable emotions that could be experienced in response to various events and circumstances.

Coaching point:

Different people, different responses. Explore examples of where 2 people experience the same situation but feel different emotions in response. This difference in emotional reaction from person to person can be due to personality, previous experience, mood, or what they know or don't know. Encourage students to understand that people won't always feel the same way about a situation as they do.

Coaching point:

Modifying or adding scenarios. When modifying or creating scenarios to align with student needs and context, ensure that the narrative does not inadvertently stigmatise, demonise or pathologise particular groups, or normalise or glamorise harmful behaviour.

Carefully consider the ways you select the 'who', 'where', 'when' and 'what' of the scenario. Consider the implicit messages that may be transmitted via choice of character names or pronouns (the 'who'). Ensure contextual relevance via the 'when' and 'where' of the scenario. Ensure relevance to the learning intentions in your choice of the 'what', which is typically the predicament, or the challenge or opportunity confronted by the character or characters. Consider the timeliness or suitability of a scenario. (For example, avoid naming a character after a student in the class, or describing a fictional situation that mirrors an actual incident too closely.)

Which emotions might you feel in this situation? *(You can name more than one for each situation.)*
You have just scored a winning goal for your team.
You managed to get your little cousin to stop crying.
Someone has borrowed your toy and broken it.
You told your friend a secret but now your friend has told everyone.
Your puppy licks you and leaps on you when you get home.
You make a special card for someone and they look so happy when they open it.
You broke your grandparent's favourite cup.
You can't get back to sleep in the middle of the night and you hear strange noises outside.
You think your old dog is really sick.
You have nothing to do.
You're starting a new school.
You made a new friend.
You are finding the place you are in too noisy.

Topic 01

Activity 3: Emotions across the school day

Learning intentions

- Students will name positive or comfortable emotions and negative or uncomfortable emotions that children may feel at school.
- Students will describe actions that children can take to help others feel happy in class and in the playground.

Equipment

- Drawing and writing materials or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that the class is going to do a mapping activity to think of the different positive or comfortable emotions and negative or uncomfortable emotions that children can experience in class and during playtime.
2. Use circle time to work with students to brainstorm the positive emotions first. Write positive words like 'proud', 'interested', 'friendly', 'excited' and 'relieved' on the board, or on slips of paper to place as a floor map.
3. Ask the class to describe some experiences that can lead to children feeling these emotions in class. (Provide some of your own guesses if students do not think of some emotions you believe may be quite common. Check with students to see if you have 'guessed' well.)
4. Repeat the process to gather responses about experiences that can cause students to feel positive emotions during playtime.
5. Repeat the process to gather a list of negative emotions, and the experiences that can trigger these emotions during class, and during playtime (for example, emotions like angry, lonely, afraid or disappointed).
6. Ask students to think of things that people already do to help make the time in class a positive experience. Invite suggestions about other things people could do to add to this positive environment. Repeat the process to collect suggestions about how they can help to make the playtime experience positive for others. Record these suggestions.
7. Ask students to use these observations and suggestions and choose one in-class and one playtime strategy that they think would contribute positively to the class or playtime experience. Arrange for them to tell a partner what they have chosen.
8. Provide time for students to create a drawing with accompanying annotation that shows both choices. The titles could be 'One thing students do to help people feel happy in class is ...' and 'One thing students do to help people feel happy during playtime is ...'
9. Invite volunteers to share their images and annotations with the class.

Review

To conclude the lesson, review the learning intentions and invite students to assess whether they have been able to think of many ways that they can each contribute to making classroom and playtime experiences positive for themselves and others.

Coaching point:
A focus on empathy. This activity helps to build empathy, as students consider how others may be affected by negative peer treatment. The activity also builds students' capability to use rich language to describe and understand more intensely felt emotions.

You may like to connect this lesson with materials or school policies relating to prevention of bullying and remind students of the importance of help-seeking. The lessons in Topic 4 (Problem-solving), Topic 6 (Help-seeking) and Topic 8 (Positive gender relations) of this resource address in more detail how students can deal with challenging or upsetting situations.

Coaching point:
Supporting neurodivergent students to connect emotions to scenarios and to lived experience. Questions that support people to connect scenarios to their own experiences can be more meaningful for diverse learners. Research studies with primary school students have shown that neurodivergent students can be supported to recognise emotions through developing a language for emotions and through matching words to visual cues. This can help them to successfully progress to matching emotions to particular situations provided in scenarios, and to be able to identify situations that made them *feel* particular emotions.[14]

Reflecting on everyday practice

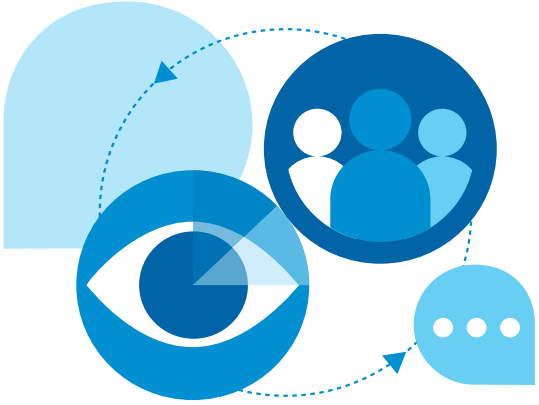
- What are some of the common positive and negative emotions that you experience within your professional role?
- How do you express these emotions?
- What effects does this have for you and for others?

Extension activities

- Extend students by asking them to write a story or draw a three-frame cartoon or set of pictures that shows how the actions of one child (or a group of children) can help to make another child feel happier in the playground or feel good about being a member of the class.
- Invite students to identify the range of emotions experienced by the characters they encounter in their stories or film studies, and link these emotions to the experiences that triggered these responses.
- Arrange for students to co-construct a display of 'friendly actions' drawing on the work in Activity 3.

Talking further

Encourage students to talk with a family member about the experiences that led to them feeling different positive or comfortable and negative or uncomfortable emotions.



Topic 02 Personal and cultural strengths

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- describe personal and cultural strengths
- identify some personal and cultural strengths they can use to respond to challenges and opportunities
- describe factors that contribute to positive relationships with people at school, at home and in the community
- identify communication skills that enhance relationships
- describe characteristics of cooperative and respectful behaviour and identify evidence of these in group activities
- identify ways they can encourage peers to treat others with respect, regardless of their differences in gender identity, ethnicity, abilities, sexuality or family background.

Informed by the evidence base

Social and emotional learning programs that use strengths-based approaches work to enhance student wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic achievement. Research in the field of positive psychology emphasises the importance of identifying and using individual strengths. Social and emotional learning programs that use strengths-based approaches promote student wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic achievement [15-18].

Research with neurodiverse adults found that the character strengths that they most commonly acknowledged and valued in themselves included honesty, appreciation of beauty and excellence, love of learning, fairness and kindness, and those who identified themselves as having the character strengths of gratitude, hope and honesty were more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction. [19]

An intervention focusing on character strengths with neurodiverse students in the early years of primary school led to improvement in executive functioning and friendship skills.[20] Research in the area of culturally inclusive pedagogy demonstrates the importance of approaches that are informed and enriched by the cultural heritages and strengths of the communities represented in the school.

Children raised within collectivist cultures may have been provided with more opportunities to value interdependence, responsibility and cooperation, while those raised within individualistic cultures may have been encouraged to value personhood, rights, initiative and independence [21]. Teachers should seek ways to recognise and embrace the strengths across both types of traditions.[22]

Strategies to advance cultural inclusion include use of examples and case studies that illustrate the richness and contribution of various cultural heritages. This could include celebrating special days and festivals of different religions and cultures represented in the school, as well as choosing stories set in different lands and cultures.

Coaching point:

Creating culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Being able to express culture makes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students feel stronger and safer. Providing safe environments for learning has positive, lifelong impacts that cannot be underestimated, and cultural safety is a key dimension of safety for Aboriginal student. Young people who don't feel safe about being themselves and expressing their needs and concerns may be less willing to report abuse.

There are many resources available to support teachers to establish a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It's recommended that teachers familiarise themselves with the Department of Education's guidance on implementing **Child Safe Standard 1** https://www.vic.gov.au/schools-culturally-safe-environments-guidance: Establish a culturally safe environment where the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued, as well as the **Koorie cultural inclusion practice** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/koorie-education/resources notes. Teachers can establish a safe cultural space with actions like:

- beginning classes by **acknowledging Traditional Owners** https://www.indigenous.gov.au/contact-us/welcome_acknowledgement-country
- supporting Aboriginal students to feel comfortable expressing their culture, including their spiritual and belief systems (being aware that some Aboriginal students may be unsure themselves about what it means to be Aboriginal, especially if they are still learning about their Aboriginal family, culture or Country)
- ensuring Aboriginal support services are available to students
- establishing a relationship with your school's Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO)
- addressing any instances of racism within the classroom directly and with appropriate consequences.

Topic 02

Activity 1: How we use our personal and cultural strengths

Learning intentions

- Students will name some of their personal and cultural character strengths.
- Students will provide examples of how a personal or cultural strength can be used in an everyday situation.
- Students will name some strengths people can use to help them to learn and thrive in everyday life.

Equipment

- 'Everyday strengths' cards (cut up and put each card in an envelope)
- A further set of 'Everyday strengths' cards placed in a box for lucky dip
- Empty bottle or spinning device
- Notebooks or paper and coloured pencils, or digital devices

Coaching point:

Supporting students to recognise cultural strengths. Some students may find it hard to describe the cultural heritage they have benefited from. Some have inhabited a dominant culture and do not recognised that they have a culture at all. It can also happen for those who have not yet been provided with sufficient opportunities to share their family and cultural heritage, for those whose culture and heritage has been portrayed in stereotypical or discriminatory ways within the dominant culture, and for those whose heritage has not been included within the curriculum of the school. This can be experienced as a form of discrimination or exclusion, where to be left out is to be erased, or made invisible, which can signal that a person's existence is not valued. Teachers can assist all students to identify some strengths that may connect to their family and cultural backgrounds (if known). For example, students might readily relate to the following terms, as well as offer additional suggestions:

- Strengths that people might have called on to get along well with others might include being fair, kind, neat, cheerful, polite, good listeners or patient.
- Strengths that people might have called on to preserve traditional knowledges about how to care for people and for Country could include being kind, caring, generous, brave, hardworking, determined, respectful, thoughtful or clever.
- Strengths that people might have called on to start over in a new country could include being brave, hopeful, hardworking or curious.
- Strengths taht people might have called on to overcome difficult times could include being brave, hardworking, determined, patient, fair, helpful, playful, forgiving or self-controlled.

Method

Part A: Identifying character strengths

1. Ask students what they have used their muscles for since they woke up this morning (for example, walking, running, sitting, writing or eating).

   Explain that, as described by the class, we can't get through a day without using our muscles or using our physical strength. However, we also cannot get through a day without using our *personal and cultural strengths*. These are the strengths that help us to apply effort to learn new things, to be fair and get along with others, to help us stay in control of the way we express our emotions, and to cope with challenges.

   For example, we may call on strengths like being kind, fair, funny, brave, forgiving, curious to learn, honest, generous, determined or brave. We call these our 'character strengths', 'personal strengths' and/or our 'cultural strengths', because they are the strengths we use in our personal, social and cultural lives.

2. Arrange for students to work in pairs or small groups. Assign each group one of the strengths cards.
3. The group will work together to check that they know what their allocated word means, and how to say it. They will get ready to teach the class about this strength – by naming it, and by giving an example that they have thought up to help the class to understand what this strength could look like when someone is showing it in their everyday life. For example, 'When someone is kind, they could be doing things like making sure everyone gets a turn, lending their ruler or helping a prep student who has fallen over.'
4. Organise for each group to 'teach' the class about their character strength. Ensure that a strong set of definitions and examples has been provided.

5. As each group presents, invite the class to work together to add additional examples to show how a particular strength may be shown in action. Add some of your observations about when you have seen the class using this strength.
6. Record and display the strengths and actions.

Part B: Strengths we use every day

1. Sit the class in a circle. Place a bottle or pen in the center to use as a spinning device. Explain that you will spin the bottle or pen and when it stops it will be pointing to the person whose turn it will be. Each time the bottle or pointer stops, the student it points to will take one of the strengths cards from the lucky dip box.
2. The student then reads the card out to the room, and either gives an example of an action someone can take that shows this strength, 'calls a buddy' to assist them to do this, or invites others to put their hand up to offer a suggestion. The student then invites the class to add more examples, taking a turn in the 'teacher' role to choose from those who put their hands up. (If a student has already had a turn, they should pass to the nearest person who has not.)
3. The student can then start the next spin and sit down in the circle. Repeat the spins until all strengths cards have been drawn from the lucky dip and examples of using each strength have been described.

Review

Invite students to comment on what they have done that has helped them to realise how they might use their personal and cultural strengths to help themselves and each other to learn and thrive.

Coaching point:
Call a friend. When students are encouraged to call on peers to add to or help them answer a question, a culture of peer support is advanced. When students volunteer to be called on, a sense of readiness and support is made visible. This can assist reticent students to feel safe to participate. Encourage the class to build on the ideas of others, so that many ways of showing personal and cultural strengths can be discussed.

Coaching point:
Unconscious bias. Remain alert to the ways unconscious bias can lead to practices like positioning the dominant group or the stereotype as the norm, thereby signalling that difference from the norm is problematic in some way. Unconscious bias can also lead to victim-blaming in situations of discrimination or violence.

EVERYDAY STRENGTH CARDS*

Kind
You do things for others without really expecting anything in return.

Honest
You tell the truth even when this is not easy for you.

Determined
When you decide to do something, you keep trying even when it is challenging.

Fair
You make sure everyone is given a turn.
You play by the rules.

Self-control
You stay in control of your strong feelings, even when you feel like yelling, sulking or being mean.

Funny
You like to laugh and to make other people laugh.

Leadership
You think of things to help the group and make suggestions about what to do.

Generous
You share your belongings with others and let them join in your games.

Brave
You do what you know is right, even when you feel scared or nervous.

Hardworking
You will stick at doing things, even when it is not easy or you don't feel like it.

Forgiving
You let go of your anger and hurt when someone has upset you.

Curious
You love to learn about new things.

* This is a modified and edited version of the 24 character strengths identified by psychologists Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman (2004) in *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*, published by Oxford University Press.

Topic 02

Activity 2: Respect for people, respect for Country

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students are advised that materials used in these lessons could contain images, voices or names of deceased people in photographs, film, audio recordings or printed material.

Learning intentions

- Students learn from an Aboriginal perspective about how white people came to the land, and declared it 'Terra Nullius'.
- Students will learn from Aboriginal perspectives about how a Welcome to Country can help us to learn about respect.
- Students will learn about the difference between a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Students will create an Acknowledgment of Country to show their respect for Aboriginal peoples and for the Aboriginal lands upon which they live and go to school.

Equipment

- *Somebody's Land* by Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing, illustrator David Hardy (or a thematically suitable alternative text created by Aboriginal author/s and artist/s)
- *Welcome to Country* by Aunty Joy Murphy, illustrator Lisa Kennedy (or a thematically suitable alternative text or video created by Aboriginal author/s and artist/s)
- Digital device to view videos

Coaching point:

Learning from Aboriginal perspectives. Books and resources authored by Aboriginal authors and artists provide opportunities for students to learn from Aboriginal perspectives. Research shows that teachers can be anxious about addressing the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priority** https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/overview/cross-curriculum-priorities, and can worry about how to introduce appropriate materials in the classroom. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 2020 discussion paper, Indigenous cultural competency in the Australian teaching workforce, found that many teachers were anxious about being culturally insensitive as a result of their lack of knowledge.[23] However, there are many resources available for teachers that guide the design of learning informed by Aboriginal perspectives. Stories by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and artists are among these resources, as are contributions from Aboriginal academics, researchers, activists and psychologists.

In Victoria, teachers are required to follow protocols when teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. The **Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols** https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx provide guidelines about how to protect the integrity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expressions and enable all Victorian teachers and students to engage respectfully and feel connected to this identity. Further advice is also available from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), which has produced **Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary schools** https://www.vaeai.org.au/wp-content/uploads/delightful-downloads/2020/01/Protocols-for-Koorie-Education-in-Victorian-Primary-and-Secondary-Schools-2019.pdf. This guidance includes an emphasis on the importance of all students learning about the natural sovereignty that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples held across Australia prior to invasion, colonisation and Federation, and still hold; the major events that have affected Koorie communities since colonisation; and the richness of the current living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

VAEAI also provides a **range of downloadable curriculum and education resources, policies, strategies and other publications** https://www.vaeai.org.au/resources/. See also the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' **Guide to evaluating and selecting education resources** https://aiatsis.gov.au/education/guide-evaluating-and-selecting-education-resources. It assists non-Aboriginal educators to make conscious and critical decisions when selecting teaching and learning.

Method

Part A: Somebody's Land

1. To model recognition and respect, introduce the authors and illustrators of the book *Somebody's Land*.

   Tell students that this book was written by Aboriginal author **Adam Goodes**, who is an Adnyamathanha and Narungga man and community leader. He is a former Australian Rules footballer, and was named Australian of the Year in 2014 for his work in the fight against racism and his advocacy in Aboriginal affairs. The Adnyamathanha people are from the area called the Flinders Ranges, which are the largest mountain ranges in South Australia. The Narungga people are from the area called the Yorke Peninsula, in South Australia.

   The book is co-authored by **Ellie Laing**, a communications professional and former political advisor and journalist, who lives on the lands of the Cammeraygal people around the places in NSW now called North Sydney, Willoughby, Mosman, Manly and Warringah.

   The illustrations are by Aboriginal man **David Hardy**, a Barkindji man, author and artist who works with Walt Disney Animation Studios. The Barkindji people are from rural and remote far-west NSW, including places called Dareton, Menindee and Wilcannia along the Darling River.

Adam Goodes is an Adnyamathanha and Narungga man and community leader. He is a former Australian Rules footballer, and was named Australian of the Year in 2014 for his public work in the fight against racism and his advocacy in Aboriginal affairs.

David Hardy is a Barkindji man, author and artist with more than 8 years of animation experience with Walt Disney Animation Studios.

Ellie Laing (nee Southwood) is a communications professional and former political advisor and journalist, who lives on the lands of the Cammeraygal people on the northern beaches of Sydney with her husband and 2 sons.

2. Read the story. Invite students to respond, using questions like:
   - What did you learn from looking at the pictures in this book?
   - What did the story teach us about the peoples who lived for thousands and thousands of years on the land now called Australia?
   - What did the story teach us about what happened when white people came to this land?

(**Note:** When reading the section '*When the white people came, they called the land terra nullius*' it can be helpful to explain that 'terra nullius' is a Latin term meaning 'nobody's land'.)

Part B: Respecting and acknowledging Country

1. To model recognition and respect, introduce the authors and illustrators of the book *Welcome to Country*. Acknowledge that the author is Aunty Joy Murphy, a senior Aboriginal Elder of the Wurundjeri People. The lands of the Wurundjeri people include parts of the place now called Melbourne, stretching out from the Yarra Valley towards Mount Baw Baw. Acknowledge that the artist is Lisa Kennedy, a descendant of the coastal Pairebeenne Trawlwoolway Aboriginal clan in north-east Tasmania.

   This book explains that the Wurundjeri Wominjeka (Welcome) ceremony is a cultural greeting by the Aboriginal Elders (liwiki), who give permission for yannabil (visitors) to enter on their traditional lands.

2. Read the story. As an option, play the beautiful video version of the story read by Abby Robinson with music by Geoffrey Gurrumu Yunupingu: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNYjXliUW7o

3. Invite students to respond, using questions like:
   - What did you see or feel when looking at the pictures in this book?
   - What were the pictures telling us about how to show respect and care for Country?
   - What was the story teaching us about the Wurundjeri people?
   - We learnt that 'wominjeka' means welcome in the language of the Wurundjeri people. What can we do to make sure all students feel very welcome and safe at our school?

Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO is a senior Aboriginal Elder of the Wurundjeri people. Aunty Joy has had numerous government appointments, including as a member of the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria and of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. She is a storyteller and a writer, passionate about using story to bring people together and as a conduit for understanding Aboriginal perspectives.

Lisa Kennedy is a descendant of the Trawlwoolway people on the north-east coast of Tasmania. Lisa was born in Melbourne and as a child lived close to the Maribyrnong River.

4. Explain the difference between Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. A welcome is given by an Elder whose traditional Country it is, or by someone who has been given permission from Traditional Owners to welcome visitors to their Country. An acknowledgment is how we show respect and thanks for being on that Country. It is our way of showing that we know that Aboriginal peoples are the Traditional Owners of the land. If you come to visit someone, they might say 'Welcome to my house. Please come in.' The visitor in turn might say, 'Thanks so much for letting me visit.'
5. Provide some examples of Acknowledgement of Country, used in the school and elsewhere.

   Examples might include:

> I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the (people) of the (nation) and pay my respects to Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

> I would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land. I would also like to pay my respects to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are present here today.

6. Show students **Peninsula Specialist College's Acknowledgement of Country song, 'Bunjl the Eagle'** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7mPNwu3PU0. This celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their connection to the Boon Wurrung Country in the area of Victoria that reaches from the Werribee River in the north-west, down to Wilsons Promontory in the south-east, taking in Westernport Bay, Mornington Peninsula, French Island and Phillip Island. The song includes the line 'Together we can find respect when we listen to the land'. (Alternatively, choose a different example of an acknowledgement – especially if you can find a more local example).

> (**Note:** The Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation are also known as the Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Bunwurung peoples.)

7. Invite students to think about what they would like to put into an Acknowledgement of Country. Encourage them to find their own way to show respect and appreciation, and to recognise traditional ownership. Provide time for them to talk with a partner, in small groups, or as a class.
8. Arrange time for students to work individually or with others to create an Acknowledgement of Country for the lands on which their school is located (or for another place in Australia that is special to them).
9. Collect or copy the works. Consider making them into a class book.
10. Support use of these acknowledgements by starting each day with a student reading one of the acknowledgements.

Review

Review the learning activities by asking students to describe some of the things they have learnt about respect from the stories they heard.

Coaching point:

Using strengths-based approaches when communicating with parents and carers. It is important to use strengths-based approaches when communicating with parents and carers about issues of concern related to students' participation at school. Aim to make your initial contact with home one that highlights a positive experience or celebrates the strengths and/or progress of the student. It can be challenging for parents if they only hear about what is *not* working, without a broader conversation about the positive aspects of their child's engagement, participation, wellbeing or learning. A focus on the problem, rather than the person, can be particularly challenging for members of marginalised communities, or for those parents or carers whose children don't feel a strong sense of belonging or connection to the school.

When working with people from diverse communities, it can be helpful to seek guidance or involvement from cultural leaders, interpreters or other community liaison specialists to provide guidance on communicating with parents and carers. For example, involving a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO), or making use of the Department of Education's interpreting and translation services: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/interpreting-and-translation-services/policy

Coaching point:
'Country' is more than 'country'. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, the meaning of 'Country' (capitalised) is much more than just the meaning of the English word 'country'.

Consider this explanation from Professor Michael 'Mick' Dodson AM, a Yawuru man, barrister, academic and 2009 Australian of the Year:

> When we talk about traditional 'Country'... we mean something beyond the dictionary definition of the word ... we might mean homeland, or tribal or clan area and we might mean more than just a place on the map. For us, Country is a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated with that area and its features. It describes the entirety of our ancestral domains. While they may all no longer necessarily be the titleholders to land, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are still connected to the Country of their ancestors and most consider themselves the custodians or caretakers of their land [24].

See, also, the following explanation from Aunty Laklak Burarrwanga. She is a Datiwuy Elder and a caretaker for the Gumatj clan, and an honorary associate of the Department of Environment and Geography at Macquarie University.

> Country has many layers of meaning. It incorporates people, animals, plants, water and land. But Country is more than just people and things, it is also what connects them to each other and to multiple spiritual and symbolic realms. It relates to laws, custom, movement, song, knowledges, relationships, histories, presents, futures and spirit beings. Country can be talked to, it can be known, it can itself communicate, feel and take action. Country for us is alive with story, law, power and kinship relations that join not only people to each other but link people, ancestors, place, animals, rocks, plants, stories and songs within land and sea. So you see knowledge about Country is important because it's about how and where you fit within the world and how you connect to others and to place.[25]

For additional information about the importance of Country, see **this source from Common Ground** https://www.commonground.org.au/article/what-is-country

Extension in History lessons: In the history curriculum section 'First Contacts' there is a focus on learning about the diversity and longevity of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the significant ways they are connected to Country and Place (land, sea, waterways and skies), and the effects of this on their daily lives.

Engaging in school-wide activities: Active recognition of significant key dates in the calendar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples provides a way for schools to advance inclusion, learning, reconciliation and respect. Key dates include:

- 13 February – National Apology Day, the anniversary of the Australian Government's apology for past government policies and practices relating to the Stolen Generations (13 February 2008)
- 26 May – National Sorry Day, commemorating the Stolen Generations
- 27 May to 3 June – National Reconciliation Week. Commemorates 27 May – the anniversary of the 1967 referendum when Australians voted to remove clauses in the Australian Constitution that discriminated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 3 June commemorates the 1992 Mabo decision of the High Court of Australia that recognised native title: that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights over their lands did survive British colonisation.
- the first to second Sunday in July – NAIDOC week, which celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 9 August – International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 13 September – the anniversary of the adoption of the *United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples*

The annual VAEAI *Koorie education calendar*, which is available from the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency online **Cultural Hub** https://www.vacca.org/cultural-hub, lists significant dates and links to stories and other education and cultural resources.

Topic 02

Activity 3: Using strengths to grow respect

Learning intention

- Students will identify what respect can look like, feel like and sound like.

Equipment

- 'Emotions' list
- 'Circle of respect' diagram

Method

1. Organise students to sit in a circle. Ask students to think–pair–share to think about how they would explain what the word 'respect' means. Build up a shared definition and some examples. Draw on the definition shown as needed.

   Respect involves being aware of and caring about the feelings, wishes, or rights of others, and treating them in a fair way and considerate way, regardless of who they are.

   Invite students to describe or demonstrate some of the different ways that they can show respect in the classroom. Provide some examples of the ways you have seen them show respect. Role-play or replicate your example if needed.

2. As students provide examples, point out the considerate nature of respectful actions, and then invite them to do so as well. For example:
   - We walk – we don't run ... so we don't cause injuries to ourselves or others.
   - We listen when someone is speaking ... so they get a fair turn, and because what they say matters.
   - We keep our things organised ... so we don't make it hard for others who share a table with us.
   - We encourage others to join in ... so everyone feels included.

   When we respect people, we pay attention to the ways our actions affect others as well as ourselves.

3. Present the 'Circle of respect' diagram. Invite suggestions about what respect might look like or sound like in the home, school and community. Record some acts of respect (what we might do or say) for each sector, on or beside the 'Circle of respect'.

4. Display the 'Emotions' list for students to refer to next and discuss:
   - How might we feel when people treat us with respect? Record these identified emotions on or beside the 'Circle of respect'.
   - How might we feel when people treat us with disrespect?
   - Can this be similar, regardless of whether we are at home, school or in the community?

5. Encourage students to observe that even though the actions we use to show respect may be a bit different from one place to another, the feelings associated with respect and disrespect can be similar. Point out that the strengths we call upon to show and grow respect are also the same from one place to another.

6. Explain that our next activity will explore the application of those strengths to show and grow respect.

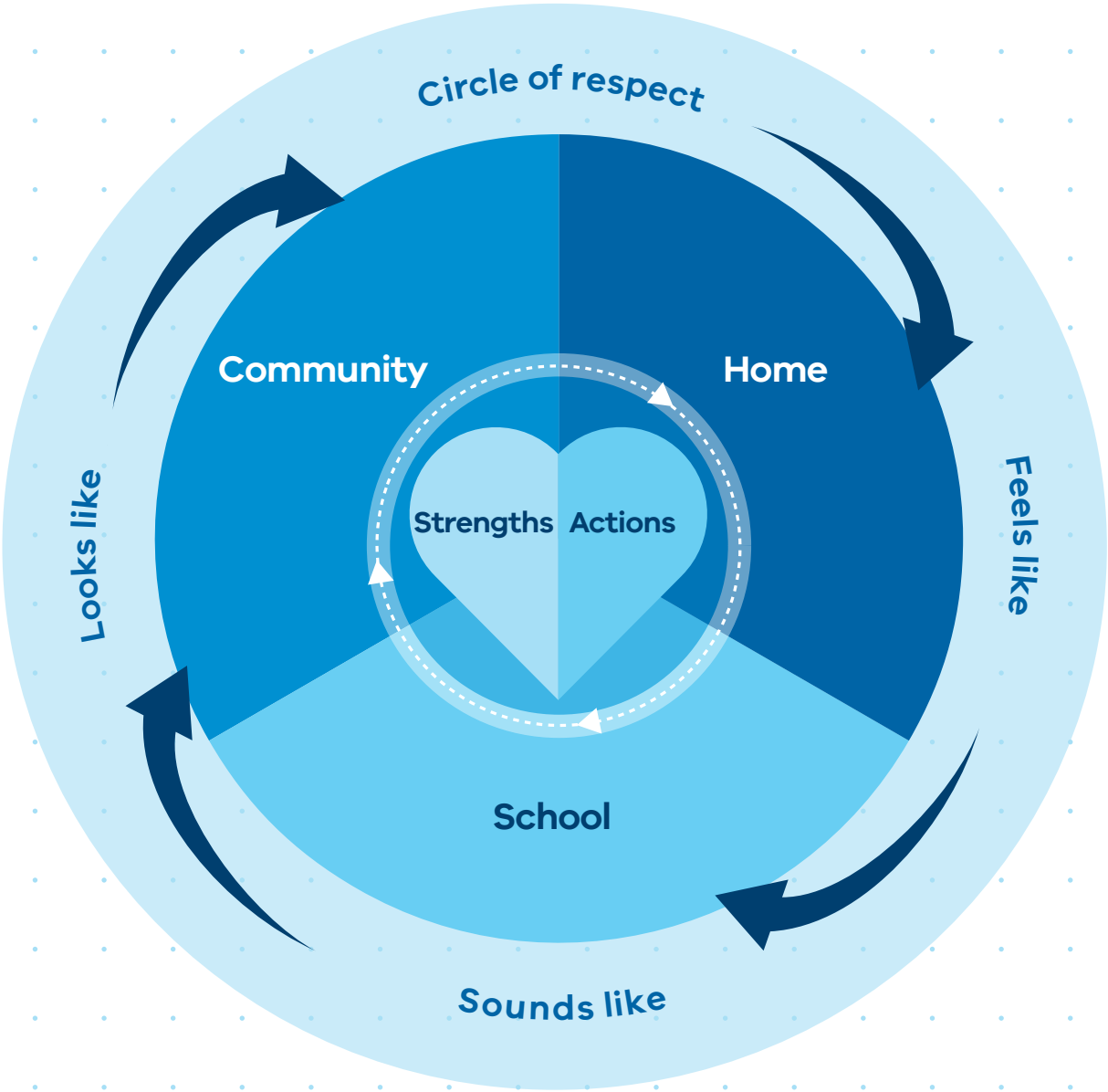
Review

Ask students to describe what they have done to demonstrate they understand what it means to show respect. Ask students to evaluate how well they think they have done in showing their knowledge of the emotions that people may feel if they are respected or disrespected.

Coaching point:
Supporting students' contributions. Use active listening skills to paraphrase what you have heard a student contribute to a discussion or activity. Active listening involves paraphrasing (rather than assessing the merits of the contribution). It is a useful way to check for meaning, to add clarity or to introduce or reinforce key terms. Invite the student who has made a contribution or their classmates to build on the ideas. Redirect, deflect and/or use additional questions to steer the conversation, elicit ideas and advance engagement with the learning intentions.

Coaching point:
Using displays to curate and share contributions. The class could create a display illustrating the 'Circle of respect'. When photographed and shared (for example, by newsletter or email), it could be a prompt for further discussion at home.

Circle of respect
diagram



Topic 02

Activity 4: Using our strengths in different situations

Learning intentions

- Students will play a game to identify skills for teamwork.
- Students will describe ways to show respect in different situations.
- Students will identify how it can feel to be treated with respect.
- Students will identify the strengths they can use to help them treat others with respect.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Respect reporters' scenarios

Method

Part A: 'Thread the needle' game

1. This game can be played in one long line or in a large circle (where the 'lead' student and 'tail' student stand alongside each other without joining hands). Emphasise the need for safety in playing this game. (Only play it if there is sufficient space and students will work safely. Play with half the class at a time for greater control.)
2. If using a line, ask students to stand arms outstretched and join hands with the people next to them. Students should have gaps between their bodies. Designate a lead student, who will start the team moving to 'thread the needle', weaving their way through every third gap by ducking under the outstretched arms. The aim is to move as a team, without breaking contact along the way. Everyone in the line will pivot and follow the leader in turn, keeping their hands connected until they have all moved through the final gap.
3. If in a circle, the lead student will disconnect from the person on their right (who becomes the 'tail' person) and start moving to the left to 'thread the needle' through every third gap.
4. If playing in a straight line, the last student in the first line is now at the front of the resulting line. If playing in a circle, the lead student is again standing next to the 'tail' person in the team.
5. Advise students to move slowly, coach each other, and be willing to loosen their grip or twist their bodies and hands carefully as needed to maintain contact with the line at all times.
6. Students will succeed when everyone in the line has followed the leader through the gaps with the line intact. The game can be repeated, with the original 'tail' person becoming the new leader, this time weaving through every second gap along the way.
7. After the game, ask:
   a. What skills/strengths did people need to use in the game for the line to stay unbroken?
   b. Where do we need to use these same skills/strengths in the classroom, the playground and at home?

Part B: Respect Advisors

1. Inform students that they are about to work as 'respect advisors'. They will work with their group to respond to a scenario. As 'respect advisors', they will need to think carefully about their scenario, then work together to provide some advice to students about how to show respect in a particular situation, like when they're on the play equipment, playing a game, or eating with their family.
   a. First, they will work out how people in the given situation could show respect for others. For example, by taking turns, or by speaking kindly.
   b. Second, they will suggest which strengths people may need to use to show respect. For example, they might need patience to wait their turn, or kindness to let someone else go first.
   c. Third, they will imagine and identify the feelings or emotions people might have if they are treated: 1) with respect, or 2) with disrespect. For example: 1) feeling proud, or happy or calm; 2) feeling hurt, or angry, or lonely.
2. Display the 'Strengths' list as a reference tool for students. Ask students to look at the list. Prompt them to think back to previous lessons on personal and cultural strengths. Discuss the notion that strengths are used everywhere in life and that we draw on them to treat others with respect. Which strengths might help us treat others with respect? (Examples include courage, fairness, kindness, determination and leadership.)
3. Model one of the scenarios provided with the whole class to demonstrate the method they will use. Then put students in groups and assign each group a different scenario from the set provided (add more situations to the scenario set as needed).

4. After spending time on the group task, invite students to report back to the class. Position them as 'peer educators' who can help their classmates learn about respect in different situations.

Review

Review the learning intentions with the class. Ask students to rate how well they have been able to demonstrate the use of strengths to show respect, what respect looks like, and how being respectful can benefit others.

Coaching point:
Fostering strengths through formative feedback. Use positive adjectives as you name a specific behaviour that you are acknowledging. This will help students learn to value the qualities you identify and understand the ways these strengths can be shown in action. This process can enrich the ways you provide positive, formative feedback about students' social capabilities.

For example: 'It was kind of you to let others go first.' 'It was generous to share out all the pens that way.' 'I saw how patiently you were waiting with your hand up.' 'I think it might have taken courage for you to have a go at that.'

'Respect reporters' scenarios

Scenario 1: We are on the play equipment.	
1: How is *respect* shown on the play equipment?	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show respect on the play equipment?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others on the play equipment?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect on the play equipment?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 2: We are playing a sport or a game.	
1: How is *respect* shown when playing a sport or a game? ?	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show *respect* when playing a sport or a game?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others when playing a sport or a game?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect when playing a sport or a game?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 3: We are playing with a pet.	
1: How is *respect* shown when playing with a pet? ?	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show *respect* when playing with a pet?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others when playing with a pet?	4: How might a pet *feel* if they are treated with respect?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 4: We are eating with our family.	
1: How is *respect* shown when eating as a family? (There may be some differences in different families.)	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show *respect* when eating with their family?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others when eating with their family?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect when eating with their family?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 5: We are on an excursion..	
1: How is *respect* shown when on an excursion?	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show *respect* when on an excursion?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others when on an excursion?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect when on an excursion?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 6: We have visitors to our home.	
1: How is *respect* shown when people visit your home? (There may be some differences in different families.)	3: Which *strengths* might you use to help you show *respect* when people visit your home?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others when people visit your home?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect when they visit your home?
We behave like this so that ...	

Scenario 7: We are working on a small group task in class.	
1: How is *respect* shown during group work?	3: Which *strengths* might people use to help them show *respect* during group work?
2: How might this be *helpful* to others during group work?	4: How might people *feel* if they are treated with respect during group work?
We behave like this so that ...	

Some emotions			
Excited	**Proud**	**Happy**	**Bored**
Interested	**Delighted**	**Sad**	**Disappointed**
Lonely	**Nervous**	**Embarrassed**	**Surprised**
Relieved	**Thrilled**	**Encouraged**	**Appreciated**
Some strengths			
Kindness	**Generosity**	**Determination**	**Leadership**
Bravery	**Hardworking**	**Honesty**	**Forgiveness**
Fairness	**Curiosity**	**Humour (Funny)**	**Self-control**

Teacher prompt – possible answers may include:

1. On play equipment

How: We take turns, give other students space, wait patiently, encourage others, say please and thank you.

We behave like this so that everyone gets a fair turn, can have fun and be safe.

2. Playing sport or a game

How: We play fair, don't cheat, keep trying, don't brag, accept the rules/umpire's decision.

We behave like this so that everyone can be included and have a good time.

3. Playing with a pet

How: We be gentle, talk softly, pat lightly, don't tease, don't poke.

We behave like this so that the pet won't be scared, and no one gets hurt.

4. Eating with our family

How: We share our food, pass items around, don't talk when our mouth is full, say please and thank you, talk and listen to each other.

We behave like this so that everyone can enjoy their meal together.

5. On excursion

How: We be polite, follow directions, walk quietly, listen quietly, put seatbelts on in the bus, use indoor voices, give space for people to pass, say please and thank you.

We behave like this so our journey is safe and enjoyable for all.

6. When people visit our home

How: We say hello, ask them questions, show them things, play with them, ask if they want a drink, thank them for coming, wave goodbye.

We behave like this so that they feel welcome and comfortable.

7. Small group task in class

How: We be fair and polite, include and listen to each group member, be patient, support and help each other. One person speaks at a time. We discuss and agree, share the work, respect personal space, ask for consent to use another person's belongings.

We behave like this so everyone feels comfortable, safe and included, and enjoys the group task – so we can do our best work and so we can all contribute.

Topic 02

Activity 5: Respect for diversity

Learning intentions

- Students will describe some of the ways people and families can be different.
- Students will share ideas about how we show respect for difference in a friendly way.
- Students will learn about the importance of using people's names and pronouns in respectful ways.

Equipment

- 'Everyday strengths' cards (from Activity 1)
- 'Circle of respect' diagram (from Activity 3)
- Writing materials or digital devices

Coaching point:
Naming difference in bodies and families. Many students may already have been subjected to hurtful remarks about their bodies, families, skin colour, physical or cognitive abilities, or other appearance or membership characteristics. This makes it particularly important to emphasise that difference is delightful and something to be proud of.

Coaching point:
Contemporary language and colloquial terms. Preferred terminology can change over time. Students may also use informal or colloquial terms to refer to people of diverse abilities, faiths, cultures, sexuality or gender identity. Sometimes students may use these terms without fully understanding their meaning. In some instances, colloquial terms also carry pejorative associations or have evolved from slurs or other forms of discriminatory talk. Consult students about the terms they use and consider incorporating contemporary language into scenarios where respectful and appropriate. Make sure that you and the students understand the meanings of substituted words. Ensure that students also learn how to use more formal language, which is an important part of knowledge acquisition. Learning the appropriate language to use can empower students and enable respectful forms of communication.

Method

Part A: We learn from the traditions of our families

1. Explain to students that in this lesson they will think about some of the ways people and their families can be different. We will also talk about how we appreciate and show respect for difference.
2. Display the 'Everyday strengths' cards and 'Circle of respect' diagram used in the previous activities. Remind students of the previous lesson when they identified strengths that can be used to grow respect.

   Discuss:
   Every culture teaches us to be kind. Can you name some of the strengths people need to use to: care for children, share food, and look after the environment?

   Ask:
   How do people in our families help us learn how to be kind? Model this activity by giving some examples of how you learnt about using strengths from your own family and cultural traditions.
3. Acknowledge that we all have different families, and our families will teach us things from their cultural traditions, or from things they learnt from their own parents, grandparents and communities.
4. Explain that one thing we learn from our families is which special festivals are important to them. Examples include NAIDOC week (a special week to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples), Eid al-Adha (a Muslim festival), Passover (a Jewish festival), Christmas (a Christian festival), Diwali (a festival celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs), Tet (the Vietnamese new year festival), Chinese New Year (Lunar new year celebration), Vesak (a Buddhist festival), Wear it Purple day (a special day for Rainbow or LGBTIQA+ young people) and Thanksgiving (an American festival). Some families have special things they like to do to celebrate festivals, or birthdays, or to remember loved people and places.
5. Invite some examples from students about special days observed in their family, community or cultural tradition. (You may wish to research some images to display, with pictures relevant to the cultural groups in your class.)

Part B: We treat differences in friends and family with respect

1. Introduce the focus on diversity of families. Point out that we all learn many things from our families. And we can be proud of our families. It is also important to value and respect the differences between people's families. Ask students to name some of the ways families can differ.

2. Point out some of the key ways families can differ in their cultural origins and the make up of the parents or carers. Emphasise that difference is delightful and makes our world a richer place.

   Explain:
   - **Different countries and languages.** Some people were born in Australia and their ancestors have lived here for thousands of years. Some were born here, but their parents, grandparents or ancestors came from other countries. Some people were born in other countries. Some speak more than one language at home and some speak only English. Some families have bravely escaped from war or disaster, and other families have lived in more peaceful places. Families can be different. The differences in our families are something for us to feel proud of.
   - **Different parents and carers.** Some people have grandparents or other family as carers, some have mums and dads who are married or living together as a couple, some have parents who live in the same house and some have parents who live in different houses. Some may have more than one parent or carer, and some may have lots of parents because they also have a stepdad or stepmum. Some may have 2 mums living together as a couple. Some may have 2 dads living together as a couple. Some may have parents or carers who are fit and well, some may have parents or carers who are not well and some may have parents or carers who have disabilities. Some may have siblings or step-siblings, while some may be the single child in their family. These differences do not make anyone better or worse than anyone else. Families come in many shapes and sizes. The differences in our families are delightful and something for us to feel proud of.

3. Point out that another difference people can have is difference in gender identity.

   Different genders. Some people are born with male body parts (for example, a penis), some people are born with female body parts (for example, a vulva) and some people have some differences in these body parts (this is called being intersex).

   Some people feel it is just right for them to be called a boy and that this matches with their male body parts. Some people feel it is just right for them to be called a girl and that this matches with their female body parts.

   Some people feel they did not get a simple match with some of their body parts, and know that 'boy' or 'girl' is not the right way to describe them, and so they tell us which word is right for them. Sometimes we use the word 'transgender' or 'non-binary' or 'gender diverse' to describe people who feel this way.

   The important thing for us all to remember is that it is good to show respect for difference. One way we can do that is to ask people about which name they want us to use for them, and whether they want us to say 'she' or 'he' or 'they' when we talk about them. Then we show our respect by doing as they ask. To show respect, we check what is right for them. The gender that is right for us is something for us to feel proud of. This could sound something like, 'Hello, I am [name] and I like to be called "she". What is your name? And what do you like to be called?'

Coaching point:
Naming difference in gender identities. One way people can show a respectful, gender-inclusive approach is to introduce their own name and pronouns when meeting people. This role models and opens the way for others to share their pronouns if they choose to. Avoid saying 'preferred' pronouns as the term 'preferred' implies someone's gender is a preference. If you accidentally misgender someone, apologise, just like you would if you got someone's name wrong. Misgendering on purpose can be hurtful to others. Purposely using the old name that is no longer used by that person is also hurtful. It is referred to as 'deadnaming'.

4. Extended activity: Ask each student to draw a picture with captions, and/or write a short story about something that is important or special to their family or community. It could be something like a special day to celebrate, a special song, a special story, a saying, a type of food, a special place, or an activity that their family thinks is special. Or, if they prefer, they can create a story about a day that they have learnt is special in someone else's family. (They might like to do some research about this day. You may wish to provide additional time for some cultural sharing or research to inform their work.)

5. Invite students to share their pictures and/or stories. (Seek ways to display the work or collate it in a volume for the class library.)

Coaching point:
Modelling the use of inclusive language. Where gender need not be a main identifier, refer to 'siblings' rather than 'brothers' and 'sisters'; refer to 'students' rather than 'boys' and 'girls'; and avoid positioning gender as a discreet binary by introducing your pronouns, and checking which pronouns students use for themselves. A binary is something that consists of 2 things or can refer to one of a pair of things. When talking about genders, binary genders are man and woman or boy and girl. Non-binary people might feel like they have a mix of genders, or like they have no gender at all.

Non-binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that sit within, outside, across or between the spectrum of the man and woman or boy and girl binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine or trans feminine, or could be agender (without a feeling of having any gender or having neutral feelings about gender) [26].

Review

Review the learning intentions and invite students to give some examples of the differences we can respect and enjoy in others.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- Take some time to appraise the character and cultural strengths you call on in your professional role.
- Identify at least one strength you see displayed by each student. Aim to catch and acknowledge strengths in action, using strengths language in the feedback you provide.

Extension activities

- Leave the display of strengths words in a visible place. Add to it as an ongoing reference to help you and students to name and acknowledge the diversity of strengths you notice others use.
- Give different students a turn to choose a 'Strength of the week' for the class to focus on in their efforts across future weeks. Run a reflection activity during circle time or class meeting time at the end of each week to discuss where they have succeeded and struggled with applying this strength. Encourage students to name instances where they have seen others show this strength.
- Create a visual map of the regions and countries where students' families have come from – organise ways to learn about, celebrate and include this cultural heritage.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk to family members about their strengths, including cultural strengths and times when these strengths have helped them in doing, achieving and/or saying something.
- Arrange for students to take their strengths display home to share with family.

Topic 03 Positive coping

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- investigate how emotional responses vary in depth and strength
- identify and describe strategies to manage and moderate expression of emotions in a range of familiar and unfamiliar situations
- identify a range of productive coping strategies to use in different situations
- learn and practise self-calming techniques
- understand the value of a meaningful apology.

Informed by the evidence base

As they grow and develop, all children will encounter situations where they feel worried, nervous and sometimes even scared.[27] Individuals deal with the demands on them by drawing on a range of coping strategies. Some strategies are more productive than others.[28] Helping students to learn a range of positive coping skills and allowing them to develop and practise them will enable them to cope more successfully with future changes and challenges.

Resilience research shows that use of positive self-talk is associated with greater persistence in the face of challenge, whereas negative self-talk is associated with higher levels of distress, depression and anxiety.[29] Research studies have demonstrated that those who use positive self-talk about how they will approach and manage challenge are more likely to succeed. Negative self-talk includes over-personalising adversity, excessive self-blame, and exaggerating the likely duration and impact of adversity or failure. It includes focusing on what is wrong and ignoring what is right. Positive self-talk includes more realistic appraisal of capacity, circumstances and effort. It includes acknowledging and being grateful for the positives, recognising personal strengths and positive intentions, and realistic attribution of responsibility. Positive self-talk can be learnt or strengthened through practice.[30, 31]

Topic 03

Activity 1: Using games to talk about coping

Learning intentions

- Students will identify ways that they are similar to and different from others.
- Students will describe things they do that help them to cope with challenge or stress.

Method

Part A: The 'Everyone is different' game

1. Arrange the class in a circle. Explain how to play the 'Anyone who ...' game. The teacher stands in the center of the circle without a chair, but everyone else is seated on a chair. They call out 'Anyone who likes ...' and add a word. (For example, saying 'Anyone who likes ice cream.')
2. Next, all players in that category must move to a different chair (that is, everyone who likes ice cream must leave their chair and find a different chair). Having finished their turn as the caller, the teacher will also rush to a chair.
3. The person left without a chair will make the next call in the game, saying 'Anyone who likes ...' but adding a different category. Everyone in this new category must swap to new seats.
4. Play a few rounds of the game. By this time, students will be seated in a mixed arrangement and some differences and similarities will have been highlighted.
5. After the game, ask students what key messages there are in the game that can remind us about the importance of making sure everyone feels welcome and accepted in class.

Coaching point:
Difference 'is'. Point out that in life we are all a bit different. We may have different emotional responses to the same situations, and different ways of coping with things we find stressful, upsetting or challenging.

Part B: Traffic Lights Game

1. Explain to students that in the Traffic Lights Game, they will need to remember 3 different formations. Ask 3 volunteers to come and demonstrate what each of these formations will look like:
   a. Thinking (one person): The student stands still with their hands on their head.
   b. Friends (make a pair): Two students stand opposite each other with one stretching out their hand as if to shake the other's.
   c. Traffic light: Students form groups of 3, positioned one behind the other, with the front person sitting cross-legged, the second kneeling just behind them, and the third standing up. Each student opens and closes their hands on either side of their face to represent flashing traffic lights.
2. When the teacher calls out an instruction, students must find the right-sized group and quickly make the relevant formation. If they can't find the right number to make a formation (when formation 'b' or 'c' is called), they must run or march on the spot, and then aim for better luck in the next round. Play a few rounds of the game.
3. Ask students:
   - What skills do you use in this game?
   - How are these skills important in daily life?
   - What can it be like when you can't find a group of the right number? What helps us to cope with these kinds of feelings in real life?
   - What role do quick reactions and self-control play in helping us to cope with challenges?

Review

Ask students to review the learning intentions. Invite them to think about the ways the skills and strengths they used in the games can also be used in other parts of life. Ask students to describe what it means to be cooperative and to include everyone in a game, regardless of differences or diversity.

Coaching point:
We all already know a lot about self-control. Highlight the importance of keeping self-control, even when in situations when we react quickly. This is especially true in situations involving anger or high levels of upset.

Topic 03

Activity 2: Coping when we feel strong emotions

Learning intentions

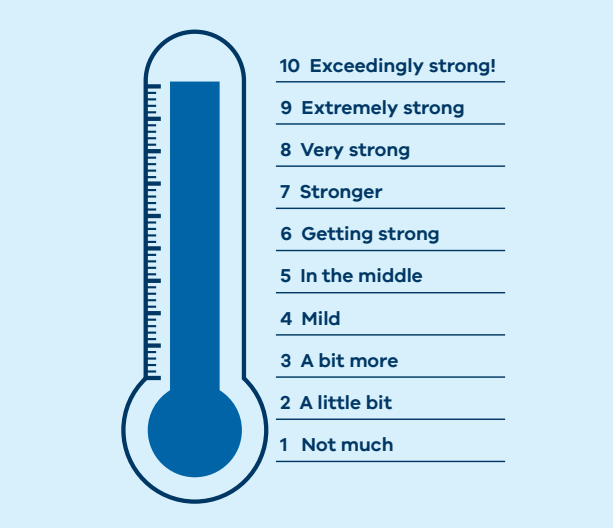
- Students will explore how emotional responses can be stronger or weaker.
- Students will practise using words that can help them describe the strength or intensity of different emotions.

Equipment

- 'Strong emotions' word list
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices
- Optional – some paint sample strips or a colour wheel with different intensities of colour

Method

1. Explain that in this activity we are going to think about strong emotions. Ask students what they think is meant by the term 'strong emotions'? Invite them to share examples of strong emotions and record some responses on the board. Strong emotions are those emotions we feel deeply or intensely. They can be positive, comfortable emotions like excitement and happiness, or negative or uncomfortable emotions like fear or jealousy. These emotions might start out mild, but then build up to be stronger and stronger over time, or they might become strong very quickly. Strong emotions can be harder to manage. We need to use our strengths and our skills to help us manage how we express our strong emotions.
2. Introduce the idea of scaling. On the board, draw a vertical 'emotions' scale or staircase, with a base of one, running up to 10 at the top. Level 1 will show the low level of an emotion, while the zones of 8 to 10 will show that the emotion is very strong or intense. (Colour variation is another way to show difference in intensity, with a scale running from very pale colours through to very vibrant shades.)
3. Ask students to think of the type of experience that might make them a little bit angry, or annoyed, with a score in the 1 to 3 out of 10, and share this idea with their partner. Collect some suggestions. Next, ask students to think of the type of experience that might make them feel very angry, or furious, with a score between 7 to 10 out of 10. They should first share this idea with their partner. Collect some suggestions. Repeat the activity, exploring the emotion of fear, first locating small fears or anxieties, then working up to things that might cause a feeling of terror.



4. Use the 'Strong emotions' word list below to help talk about how we use words to help us describe when an emotion has become stronger. Write the word list on the board. For example, we might feel nervous or anxious about doing something new, but if we feel scared, that suggests that the emotion is much stronger, and if we feel terrified, we are even more scared. We might feel angry when someone takes our belongings, but if we feel furious or enraged, this means we are feeling that anger very strongly. Work through the different words with students. Ask students to help you add the words for emotions from the list to match the zones on the emotions scale. Discuss which emotions are milder and which are stronger in intensity. Co-create some examples of ways that a certain experience may provoke a mild emotion, and a different experience, or of how frequent repetition of the initial experience can lead to escalated or stronger emotions.

Strong emotions – word list	
Happy – Delighted – Thrilled	**Annoyed – Angry – Furious**
Embarrassed – Ashamed – Humiliated	**Unhappy – Sad – Miserable**
Worried – Anxious – Panicky	**Worried – Afraid – Terrified**

Coaching point:
People react differently. Point out that people are different. This means that while one person may have a strong reaction to a certain experience, someone else may have a milder reaction. Part of being a good friend is learning to notice how other people respond. Sometimes you can tell by watching, and 'reading' their body language. However, sometimes you need to ask people to find out how they feel. Sometimes you need to tell other people how you feel, so they can understand when you are experiencing strong emotions. Sometimes having strong emotions is a sign to us that we need some help, or that we need to talk to someone about a problem we are experiencing.

1. Arrange for students to work in pairs to draw their own 'Emotions intensity scale'. Students choose one set of emotions from the 'Strong emotions' word list. They write the emotion next to the appropriate zone on one side of their emotions scale. On the other side of their scale, they add a triggering event or series of events that they think may lead to the person feeling each emotion they have listed.

Review

Review the learning intentions by inviting pairs of students to report back to the class, and to talk about the sorts of situations that can lead to people feeling an emotion at a milder or stronger level. Point out that people are different. This means that while one person may have a strong reaction to a certain experience, someone else may have a milder reaction.

Coaching point:
Thinking about coping. It is helpful for students to be able to identify events or situations that can trigger a strong emotional response. Encourage them to ask themselves, 'I wonder why I feel the way I do?' and 'What happened before this feeling?' This understanding may assist students to develop self-awareness and recognise when they need to use self-calming coping strategies.

Topic 03

Activity 3: Taming angry feelings

Learning intentions

- Students will describe the sorts of things that people can get angry about.
- Students will practise ways to calm down and stay in control when they feel angry.
- Students will identify the self-calming strategies that work well for them.

Equipment

- 'Techniques for controlling anger' list
- Stress balls or toys

Method

1. Write the word 'anger' on the board. Ask students to build a list of the sorts of things that people can get angry about.
2. Point out that most of the time, people their age and older are more able than younger children to control the way they express anger, so they don't cause damage, or hurt or harm themselves or others.

   Ask:
   What sorts of things do some people do when they don't control the way they express their anger?
3. Introduce the idea that sometimes when we feel very angry, we may feel like doing or saying something that will hurt someone else.

   Explain:
   'Little children may sometimes throw tantrums and scream or hit or even bite people. As we get older, we learn to control the way we behave when we feel angry so that we don't do this. There are many strategies people can use to help them control their anger when it comes on strongly.'
4. Explain that the class is going to practise some self-calming techniques so students can consider which strategies they might like to use at different times. Sample ideas from the 'Techniques for controlling anger' list that follows. (You'll need to decide first whether to sample and compare all techniques at once, or whether to teach these techniques over several days.)
5. Each time students sample one of the techniques, ask them to describe how it made their body feel. If sampling techniques all at once, ask students to choose the 2 or 3 that they like best and to share their choices with others.
6. Extension: Display the 'Techniques for controlling anger' list in the classroom. From time to time, refer to the techniques or apply them briefly to help the class relax. For example, 'ice to water' or 'five deep breaths' can be done while seated to reduce class tension levels.

Techniques for controlling anger

1. Count first

   Ask students to scrunch up tight and clench their fists as if they are feeling angry, then let go of the tension as they count from 1 to 10. Have fun by doing this in unison.
2. Take five deep, slow breaths

   Invite students to try this one while standing, then sitting, and then while sitting or lying on the floor.
3. Squeezing technique

   Ask students to try out what it is like to press their hands firmly together. Stress balls/toys can be passed around for students to try squeezing. Ask students to try the squeezing technique by holding on tightly to a pen or a tabletop. Try squeezing hard while counting to 10, then letting go with a big sigh.
4. 'Robot to rag doll' (or 'Ice to water')

   Invite students to try slowly 'dissolving (or transforming) from a robot to a rag doll' while standing up. They can then try 'melting from ice to water' while sitting in their chair.
5. Time out

   Ask students to name a place where they can take 'time out' in the schoolyard, and at home.
6. Drink of water, take a walk – or both

   Highlight that this is a good strategy for the playground, especially if students 'take a walk' to go to the taps or to get their bottle for a drink of water.

Review

Invite students to nominate calming techniques that might be more suited to the classroom, the home or the schoolyard.

Coaching point:
We get better with practice. The self-calming strategies work well when they are practised regularly. They can be used after play sessions as a form of general calming. In this way, students will learn to use them in a range of situations, including times when they feel overwhelmed by emotion. Remind students who are feeling angry to use their self-calming strategies.

Coaching point:
Encourage students to identify when they need to use self-calming or self-cheering coping strategies. Teach students signals they can use to let you know when they need to use one of their self-calming or self-cheering coping strategies.

Positively reinforce their capacity to identify when they need to deliberately self-regulate.

Work with students to establish routines or strategies that are suitable for the classroom. For example, some students may find it helpful to use a fidget toy, work for a while in a 'quiet corner', get a drink of water, wear headphones for a short time, or engage with a short mindfulness activity, such as colouring. Work with colleagues and families to understand the needs and self-regulation strategies of neurodivergent students, and trauma-affected students.

Topic 03

Activity 4: Making apologies

Learning intentions

- Students will describe the kinds of actions that can hurt or upset others.
- Students will practise ways to apologise when they have hurt someone.

Equipment

- Writing materials or digital devices

Method

1. Explain: Sometimes we may do something that is mean or hurtful. Then later, we realise that this was the wrong thing to do because our actions have upset or hurt someone. When this happens, we need to *apologise*.
2. Ask:
   - Can you describe what an 'apology' is?
   - What sorts of things might we need to apologise about?
   - What does it feel like when someone apologises to us?
   - What do we feel like after our apology has been given?
   - What are the ingredients of a good or meaningful apology?
3. Using the scenarios below, discuss which character may need to apologise. Suggest what they need to apologise for, and how they might make a meaningful apology. (Alternatively, craft some scenarios to reflect situations students find themselves in.)

Scenario 1: Too busy to help. Samesh accidentally put his sister Jaya's school hat in his bag. At playtime, Jaya was not allowed to move beyond the shade because she had no hat to wear, which meant she was left without her friends. When Samesh realised he had the wrong hat, he wouldn't give it back, because he wanted to keep playing with his own friends. Later, Samesh found his hat at the bottom of his school bag.

How do you think this made Jaya feel?

- What could Samesh have done instead of keeping Jaya's hat?
- Should Samesh apologise to Jaya for being unfair?
- How do you think an apology might make Jaya feel?
- How might Samesh feel if he makes an apology to Jaya?

Scenario 2: Standing up for others. Yindi was very proud to be learning about Aboriginal culture and history from her Aunties. Her culture made her feel so proud and gave her courage to speak out when other kids said mean things about people. When Jayden mocked Jung about his Korean heritage, some other kids laughed, but Yindi said, 'Stop, Jayden. If you can't say something nice about Jung, don't say anything.'

- How do you think this support from Yindi made Jung feel?
- How do you think Yindi felt about being so brave?
- What could other people have done or said to support Yindi and Jung and show this was not okay, or to get help to deal with any show of racism?
- If Jayden said sorry to Jung, how might that make Jung, Yindi and Jayden himself feel?

Scenario 3: The red card. Min and Aiko were playing soccer in opposing teams. Min had already scored a goal and Aiko was upset that his team was behind on the scoreboard. When Min ran towards him again, dribbling the ball, Aiko deliberately ran at Min, pushing them over. Min hurt their arm in the fall and had to stop playing the game. Aiko received a red card and had to leave the game.

How do you think Min and their teammates felt about Aiko's illegal push?

- What could Aiko have done instead of pushing Min?
- Even though Aiko has been penalised by the referee, should he also apologise to Min?
- How might Min feel if an apology is given?
- How might Aiko feel after giving an apology?

Scenario 4: In a hurry. Because Shane uses crutches to help him to move around, he needs to use the paved pathways at school. However, a group of students often sit down on the pathway at playtime, which blocks the way for Shane and makes it hard for him to get to the toilet in a hurry. He doesn't like having to ask them to move. He wishes they would just show respect and move without being asked. One day, Shane tries to go around the group by going off the pathway, but he falls and hurts himself.

- How do you think Shane feels about having to ask students to clear the pathway for him?
- What could other people have done or said to show that sitting on the pathway was not okay?
- How might Shane's friends have shown support for him?
- How might Shane feel if an apology is given?
- How might students who have blocked his path feel after giving an apology?

Coaching point:
What is ableism? Students with disability can be subjected to bullying or exclusion by peers, and may also not feel respected and included by adults. This is a form of ableism, which has no place in schools. Ableism is when people discriminate against or unfairly treat those who have disabilities or fail to cater for their needs. It can come from a lack of understanding about what people with disability may need and want, making assumptions about people and not allowing them voice and choice regarding decisions about their lives. It can include being mean or leaving people out on purpose. It can also include things like not providing wheelchair access, learning support, quiet spaces or sign language, not asking people what they need, or not treating people with full respect.

4. Reflect on strengths needed. What does it take for someone to say sorry to someone else? (Strengths like courage, fairness, honesty and kindness.)
5. Share the 'meaningful apology' model that follows and invite students to create some examples of what this model could sound like if used in one of the previous scenarios.

   How to make a meaningful apology

a. Say what you did wrong.
b. Say how you think it made the other person feel.
c. Say how you feel now that you see you did the wrong thing.
d. Promise not to do it again.
e. Say sorry (and mean it).

6. Challenge students to create a fictional apology letter. They might choose one of the scenarios, and write the letter on behalf of one of the characters. Or they might choose their own scenario.
7. Once students have had time to craft their letters, invite some volunteers to read them aloud to the class. Alternatively, give students time to read their letters to a small group of peers.

Coaching point:
Positive peer modelling. This activity provides opportunity for peer modelling and assists students to co-create positive social norms around the importance of authentic apologies. Authentic apologies help with recovery. They assist the person who has done something wrong to consider, describe and take responsibility for the impact that their hurtful behaviour has had on others.

Review

Ask students to comment on how well they think they have met the learning intentions. Ask them what they did in the lesson that helped them with this.

Reflecting on everyday practice

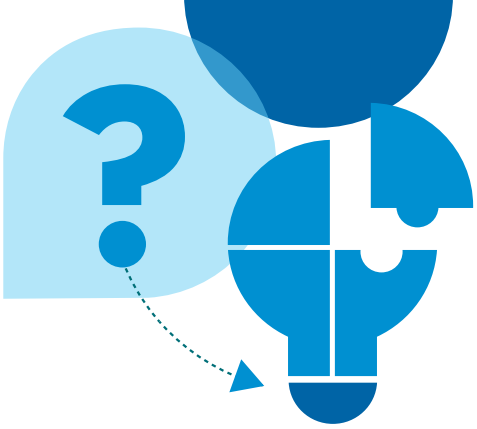
- What sorts of anger-management strategies work most effectively for you?
- How do you model anger management in the classroom?
- What strategies do you use to assist students to learn how to self-calm when they experience anger, frustration or defeat?

Extension activities

- Use stories that describe how a character has persisted to overcome hurtful or strong emotions, or has assisted another character who is in distress.
- Run a story-telling session, inviting students to write about a character who has found a way to deal positively with their strong emotions.

Talking further

Encourage students to ask at home about the types of things their family members do to help them cope with strong emotions.



Topic 04 Problem-solving

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify communication skills that enhance relationships
- describe characteristics of cooperative behaviour and identify evidence of these in group activities
- contribute to and predict the consequences of group decisions in a range of situations
- identify a range of conflict-resolution strategies to negotiate positive outcomes to problems
- discuss the concept of leadership and identify situations where it is appropriate to adopt this role
- describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to help students learn a range of problem-solving skills through applied learning tasks to help them cope with future challenges. Problem-solving is identified by the World Health Organization as a key skill for health.[32] To be able to solve problems, children need to be able to think critically and evaluate the consequences of various actions.[5] Using problem-solving tools to explore possible responses to challenges provides the opportunity for students to develop critical-thinking skills, while also learning with and from a range of other students within small task groups. For example, use of scenarios or narratives has been shown to be an effective basis for discussion between autistic and non-autistic pairs, generating increased connectedness and understanding of each other.[33]

Coaching point:
Protective interrupting. Protective interrupting is also a strategy that teachers can use, in an assertive and respectful way, to interrupt students who begin to disclose private or sensitive information about themselves or others. It is a teaching strategy designed to protect the person telling the story from disclosing in front of the class (redirecting students to a more supported context for disclosure instead), other people in the story from having their experiences discussed in a public setting, students from experiencing any distress at hearing the disclosure, and the fidelity of the lesson. If a student begins to disclose private information about themselves or others in the group space, respectfully interrupt the student by acknowledging their contribution and preventing further disclosure, for example, 'Thank you. It sounds as though you have something important to talk about. Let's chat about this after the lesson when we can talk properly.' Prioritise meeting with the student(s) in a more private, safe space within the school as soon as possible.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Topic 04

Activity 1: Using games to talk about skills for problem-solving

Learning intentions

- Students will develop a definition of what it means to have a problem.
- Students will describe actions and skills used in teamwork.
- Students will develop a list of problems that children around their age may experience

Equipment

- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper or digital devices

Method

1. Ask students what they think is meant by the word 'problem'. What might it mean when we say somebody has a problem?

   A problem is a situation, question, or issue that causes difficulty, challenge, stress, doubt or confusion. A problem is a situation that requires people to put in some effort or care to deal with it well.

2. Explain that students will play some games, and then discuss what kinds of skills and actions help the group to solve the problems or challenges that are part of the game. They will then discuss the kinds of skills and actions that can be used when people face a shared problem.
3. Demonstrate how to play the 'knots' game with a volunteer group of about 8 students (not too much larger as this makes it too difficult). Choose alternative problem-solving or collaborative-effort games if preferred.
4. To play 'knots', ask the 8 students to form a circle. They close their eyes, put their hands forward, and grip another person's hand in each of theirs. (In each of their hands they will hold one other hand.) When they open their eyes, they will see they have formed a giant human knot. The group must find a way of undoing the knot, without letting go of each other's hands, and without hurting anyone.
5. Organise students into groups to play the game. If they get the knot out quickly, they can play the game over again, but this time without speaking. Offer alternatives for those who prefer not to play. For example, taking on the role of safety warden (who will stand near you and help watch out for a possible accident), cheer squad (who will applaud or encourage during or after the game), coach (who will make suggestions about how to make improvements when re-playing the game), or reporter (who will share what they noticed after the game).
6. After the game ask:
   - What sorts of actions or skills helped the group to solve the problem?
   - How and when do we use these skills in the classroom to make it a friendly and effective learning place for everyone?
   - What sorts of things slowed the group down in solving their problem?
   - What strengths do we call on to work effectively in that game?
   - What messages can you see in this game that could help us to work on solving our problems in our everyday lives?
7. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to brainstorm some of the problems children around their age can experience.
8. Record their ideas on the board.
9. Once the list has been made, work with the class to create some categories from the suggestions on the list. (Examples might include problems about what to play, arguments with friends or siblings, feeling shy or scared about doing something new, not knowing what to do after getting into trouble, money problems, family worries, sickness or injury, dealing with changes or disruptions to routines.)
10. Acknowledge students' contributions and explain that in another lesson they will learn how to use a problem-solving tool that can help people work out what to do when they experience problems like those listed.
11. Remind them that if they are experiencing a problem at school, the option of 'telling a teacher' is one they can use. Outline some different ways they can alert you that they or a peer may be experiencing a problem.

Review

Review the learning intentions with students. Invite them to point out some of the key teamwork skills they identified and some of the different types of problems they noted that people may encounter at their age.

Coaching point:

Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can be used to help students to mix and to strengthen social connectedness, which is a protective factor for mental wellbeing. Structured play can assist those who are anxious in social situations to participate with their peers. Games can also be used to advance social and emotional skills.[34] Following participation in the game, ask students to identify the skills they used that could also be used in other life situations. Encourage them to find key 'messages' in the games about how to conduct respectful relationships. Games can also be used to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise the class, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

Topic 04

Activity 2: Roads and roundabouts problem-solving model

Learning intentions

- Students will identify different actions someone could take to solve a problem.
- Students will identify possible consequences of actions used to solve a problem.

Equipment

- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices
- 'Roads and roundabout' model
- List of some problems identified by students in Activity 1
- Optional – 'Problem-solver' scenarios from Activity 3

Method

1. Invite students to review the definition of a problem that they created in an earlier lesson. Note the work they did to describe some of the types of problems children their age can experience, and the examples they provided. Explain that you will work as a class to use a problem-solving tool to think through one of those types of problems.
2. Point out that sometimes when we experience a problem, we're not sure what the right thing is to do, or we're not sure we can manage on our own. It is important to use our brains to help us think carefully about what we can do to solve a problem. We call this kind of thinking 'problem-solving thinking'. Explain that when we want to solve a problem, we use our thinking skills as well as our skills in understanding. This helps us control the way we express our emotions. It helps us to slow down so we can think things through. It helps us to understand how our actions might affect other people as well as ourselves.
3. Introduce the 'Roads and roundabout' model for problem-solving. Draw a model of the roundabout with roads coming off it.

   Explain that the roundabout is where we have different choices about where to go or what to do. It is the place where you are when you are going around and around, trying to work out which is the right road to take. (It helps to be able to name your problem at this point – for example, deciding what game to play.)

   Before we work out which road to take, we want to know where each one goes! So let's imagine the different options, and name them as well. Each option is a different road that leads to a different destination. For the problem 'deciding which game to play', we might have one road for basketball, one for handball, one for chasey and another for football.

   Once we have named these different roads, we can see what our choices are as we go around the roundabout. Then we need to work out what it might be like when we arrive, after having chosen one of the roads. Is this where we want to go? Let's imagine the positives and negatives, or good and bad sides, of what it might be like when we get there. For example, a positive of handball is that you won't get muddy playing, but a negative might be that only 4 can play. We imagine what might be the good and the bad sides – or the positives and negatives – for each of the destinations.
4. Make a big 'Roads and roundabout' map on the floor. Choose a suitable scenario based on the work the class did in the previous learning activity to identify types of problems. (Alternatively, select a scenario from the collection provided in the following learning activity.)
5. Read the scenario to the class, naming the problem in the middle, brainstorming the options (roads), then brainstorming the positives and negatives for each destination.
6. Provide the opportunity for students to choose the strategy that they think would be most helpful. Compare the range of preferences in the class. Invite students to speak about what they preferred about the strategy that they chose.
7. Revisit the teamwork skills list developed in the previous session. Ask students to name some of the skills that might be needed to carry out their choice. Ask others to note some of the teamwork skills the class demonstrated during that activity.
8. Reinforce that when we are choosing a strategy to help us solve a problem, we may have a different preference to that of our peers. It is important that we choose the strategy that we think is right for us.

Review

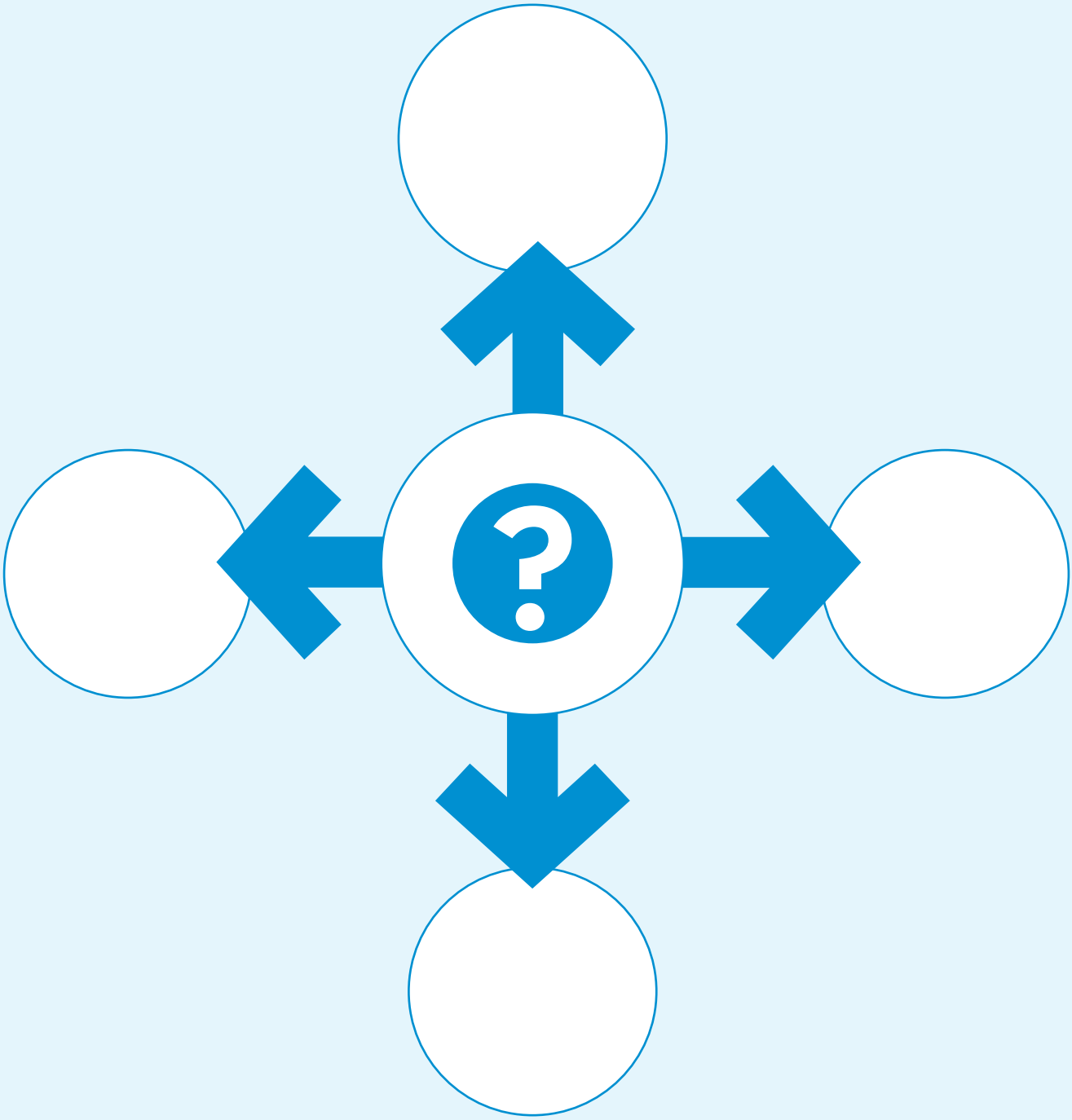
Revisit the learning intentions with students. Ask them to comment on how they think the 'Roads and roundabout' tool helped them to take 3 important steps in problem-solving:

1. Name the problem.
2. Think of more than one possible action to take.
3. Think through the possible outcomes or consequences before making a choice.

Coaching point:
Listening to our bodies. Remind students that when problems start out small, we can often deal with them on our own, using our strengths and coping strategies. But sometimes problems can get big, and it is important to know when to ask for help. Our feelings are good at telling us when things are getting too hard to manage on our own. Our heart can start beating faster; we can get hot and sweaty, or we might go pale and feel faint; we might cry easily, or feel a bit sick in the stomach; our muscles might tighten up; we might feel we can't move, or we might feel we want to run away; and we might get angry or anxious. Sometimes it can be hard to concentrate or to sleep. It is important to listen to these feelings. They might be telling us it is time to ask for help or to tell someone about what is happening.

Coaching point:
Help-seeking reminders. Remind class members that if they have a big problem that they would like to discuss, they can come and see you out of class to talk more privately. Alternatively, they can give you a note to let you know they would like to make a time to talk.

Roads and Roundabout Model



Topic 04

Activity 3: Problem-solving in peer situations

Learning intentions

- Students will practise using the 'Roads and roundabout' problem-solving model to identify options and consequences.

Equipment

- 'Problem-solver' scenarios
- 'Roads and roundabout' model
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that students will have the opportunity to build on the work from the previous lesson, where they learnt about the 'Roads and roundabouts' problem-solving tool. They will work in groups and use the model to think through some problems provided in the form of scenarios. Display the 'Roads and roundabout' model.
2. Put students in groups of 3 or 4 and distribute the 'Problem-solver' scenarios. Either allocate scenarios or ask groups to choose. Encourage them to do more than one scenario if time permits.
3. Explain that they will use the 'Roads and roundabout' model to think through their scenario. First, they will discuss their scenario and name the problem. Then they will think of as many different options to solve the problem as they can. Once they have their list, they will write each option onto a 'road' that comes out of the roundabout. They should then work out the positives and negatives for each 'destination' or choice. Once these are complete, they should choose the option they recommend and prepare to explain why they have made that choice or explain why different people prefer different options.
4. Arrange for the groups to report back. As they report, build a list of the types of strategies that they considered using. For example, take turns; make a plan; ask an adult; find an alternative game or activity; compromise; tell someone how you feel; ask someone to help you; use a game to work out who goes first (such as by playing 'rock, paper, scissors'); ask them to stop; talk it over with a friend; or ask your parent to help you.
5. Explain that these are all problem-solving strategies. Work with the class to create a display that shows a list of these different problem-solving strategies.

Ways we could respond to a problem	
Tell a teacher	Think of an alternative
Talk to a friend	Ignore it
Ask the person to stop	Walk away
Take it in turns	Make a joke
Do 'rock, scissors, paper'	Ask people what they feel
Make a plan	Smile and try to be friendly
Talk to a parent or carer	Apologise
Tell people how you feel	Ask each person to say what they want
Ask for suggestions	Make a joke
Take a big breath and calm yourself	Take a vote

Review

Review the learning intentions and invite students to share one or 2 important things they have learnt about problem-solving and problem-solving strategies.

Coaching point:
Affirming strengths and skills used in group work. There is an opportunity to explore the ways the strengths of leadership, creativity, honesty, forgiveness, kindness and fairness can be applied in group problem-solving situations. Invite students to name the teamwork actions that people in their task group used to help get the job done. Reinforce that these are important skills in group work and in problem-solving.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- When faced with a problem, how do you respond?
- How do you model problem-solving in the classroom?
- When do you provide lateral-thinking exercises for students?

Extension activities

Provide students with a 'letter from a friend' that details a problem commonly experienced in the playground. Ask them to respond to the letter with advice about possible strategies.

Talking further

Invite student to share their 'Roads and roundabout' model with people at home. Encourage them to make one to display at home, and to try it out on a decision that they make there.

Problem-solving scenarios

Scenario 1:

Jake waits with his older brother after school for 20 minutes but his parents have not come to pick them up. His parents have never been late before. Now the playground is all quiet and empty. Jake's older brother wants them to start walking home. But Jake knows they are not allowed to do this.

- What is Jake's problem?
- What could Jake do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 2:

Peyton is with her group of Year 4 friends. They like to sit on top of the monkey bars. But when the Year 3 students want to climb up, Peyton's friends won't move to let them have a turn. Instead, they have started calling the younger students names and telling them to go away. Peyton feels bad because she can see this is very unfair.

- What is Peyton's problem?
- What could she do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 3:

Tan wants to watch her favourite TV show, but her big brother keeps changing the channel so he can watch the football.

- What is Tan's problem?
- What could she do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 4:

Chung is with 3 classmates. They all want a turn on the swings, but there are 2 swings and 4 people. Now they are fighting about who gets the first turn.

- What is Chung's problem?
- What could Chung do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 5:

Pina left her lunch at home, and when her friends ask why she is crying, Pina tells them about her problem but says she is too scared to tell the teacher.

- What is Pina's problem?
- What could Pina do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 6:

The Preps keep chasing Jarrah and his friends during playtime. One of them is Jarrah's cousin. It is getting annoying as they keep crowding around and wanting to join in, but they are too small to play basketball properly.

- What is Jarrah's problem?
- What could he do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 7:

Viv and his friend Claude want to play soccer but their 2 other friends want to play handball.

- What is Viv and Claude's problem?
- What could Viv and Claude do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

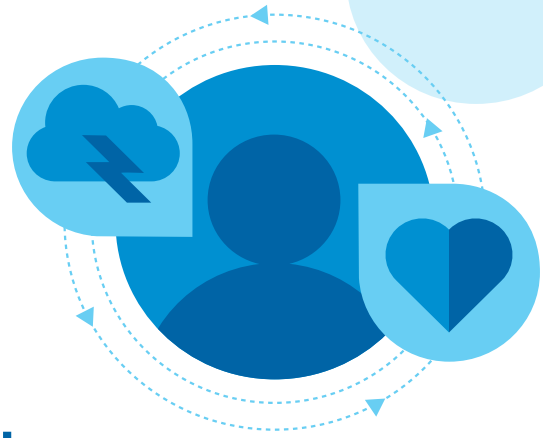
Scenario 8:

Abdul's little brother keeps taking his toys outside and hiding them in the garden. The first time it was like a funny game of hide-and-seek, but now it is very annoying, and things are getting lost.

- What is Abdul's problem?
- What could Abdul do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?

Scenario 9: Parvi feels scared about going to school camp.

- What is Parvi's problem?
- What could Parvi do? (Think of more than one suggestion.)
- What might be the positive and negative outcomes of each choice?
- Which do you recommend?
- Why?



Topic 05 Stress management

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- describe the influence that people, situations and events can have on their emotions
- explore strategies to manage physical, social and emotional change
- describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- explain the value of self-discipline and goal-setting in helping them to learn and to cope with change and challenge
- describe personal strengths and identify coping strategies that they can apply to help them cope with change and challenge.

Informed by the evidence base

Stress is a normal part of life, especially as children get older. Children who cope better with life's stressors develop good mental health and wellbeing.[28] However, students need assistance to recognise their personal signs and symptoms of stress. They also need practice in how to develop suitable strategies for dealing with stress. These learning opportunities will better prepare children to cope effectively with challenges in the future.

A study with children from Years 3 to 4 investigated the stressors they experienced at school, along with the strategies they used to cope. It found that children faced a range of stressors including interpersonal conflict arising from unfair play, anxiety about asking for help from peers or teachers, and worry about 'bad grades' or performance challenges related to school work and expectations.[35]

Mission Australia's 2022 annual Youth Survey found that almost 3 in 10 young people aged 15 to 19 years (29%) reported high psychological distress, 16% reported that their overall mental health and wellbeing was poor, and almost a quarter reported feeling lonely most of the time.[36] Almost half of females and gender-diverse young people reported feeling extremely or very concerned about body image (females 47%; males 15%; gender diverse 49%). Many young people reported feeling extremely or very concerned about mental health (females 53%; males 25%; gender diverse 72%), and about school or study problems (females 47%; males 23%; gender diverse 46%). Close to 2 in 5 (38%) young people who expressed strong climate concerns reported that they were also experiencing high psychological distress, and 1 in 5 (23%) of these young people had a negative outlook about their future.[36]

Students report finding it hard to generate coping strategies, indicating the importance of an applied focus on developing coping strategies suitable for a range of contexts. A review of mindfulness interventions used with children and young people found that 'body-centered meditations' and 'mindful observations' guided by explicit instructions led to improved socio-emotional outcomes.[37]

Topic 05

Activity 1: What to do when we feel stressed

Learning intentions

- Students will describe what it means to feel stressed.

Equipment

- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices
- 'My self-calming strategies' list
- 'Checklist of coping strategies'

Method

Part A: What is stress?

1. Ask students what it means when we say 'I am so *stressed*.' Record students' responses on the board. Work towards developing a shared definition.

   'Stressed' is a word we use to describe the overall feeling of being worried over a longer period, or the feeling that we should be doing more than we can manage. Sometimes our problems can cause us to feel worried or distressed as we think about what we should do. We can feel stressed when we have a few problems all at once, or when our problems last for a long time.

   We can also feel stressed when too much is going on around us, when we are bothered by too much noise, activity or light, when our environment seems threatening or uncomfortable, or when people are treating us badly. When we are stressed, we may feel different emotions like anger, frustration, fear, anxiety or inadequacy, or feel overwhelmed. Sometimes this can give us a stomach ache or a headache, or we may feel grumpy or teary, or have trouble paying attention at school and remembering things at home.

   Everyone experiences stress at some time. But there are also many different ways that people help themselves to cope with stress. We call these 'coping strategies'. We have already looked at some of the strategies we use to help us cope with feeling angry. In later activities we will look at other coping strategies.

   Give one example for each area of stress:

   - Something is *hard*. (For example, having a test at school in a subject you don't feel very good at.)
   - Something is *new*. (For example, entering the school swimming for the first time.)
   - Something is *scary*. (For example, having to have an injection or going down a giant slide.)
   - We have *too much to do*. (For example, you need to clean your bedroom, do your homework and feed the dog before you can go out to play with your friend.)
   - Something doesn't *feel right*. (For example, it doesn't taste right, doesn't feel right on your body, or the place is too noisy or too full of action.)
   - *Changes just happen* and things don't go as you expect. (For example, you have a different carer or teacher, or you go somewhere and you can't play with your favourite things.)

2. Put students in groups of 3 or 4. Ask students to brainstorm examples of things that could make a person feel stressed. (For example, 'What kinds of challenges or problems might be stressful for you?' 'What new things might you find stressful?' 'What kinds of experiences can be stressful?')

3. Invite each group to feed back some of their responses. Record the lists on the board for students to look at. As they report back, emphasise that what might be stressful for one person might be enjoyable for another. For example, children can feel delighted or distressed when encountering lizards, heights, noisy environments or crowds, or when asked to work with students they don't know very well. Remind students to respect the differences they may find between themselves and others, and to respect that people may have different abilities and preferences. One way we can respect people's needs is to ask them about what they find helpful.

Coaching point:
Mixing students. Students may not be confident to mix across friendship groups and genders. Mix students into different pairs or groups so that they learn to work well with a range of people and gain confidence in crossing any friendship or gender divides that exist in the class.

To randomly mix students, you could use one of these methods:

- Name lotto – Cut up a copy of the class roll and mix the names together in a box or 'hat'. Then draw out 4 or 5 names at a time to create random groups.
- Count off – Count students off (depending on

the number in your class) so that they end up with groups of 4 or 5 students. (For example, with 24 in the class, you would count students off from one to 6, then start again.) When you finish, ask all those who were 'number one' to form a group and so on).

- Phone/iPad team-sorting apps – Students can be allocated randomly or sorted selectively using these apps, ahead of time, to support learning.
- Interactive challenges – For example, lining up by height or birth month, or in alphabetical order by first or last name.

Part B: Calming and coping

1. Explain to the class that most of us have different actions that we like to take to help us calm down when we feel angry, or to feel comforted when we are upset. We all need actions we can take when we are managing strong emotions.

   Give some examples of your own. For example, 'I like to walk my dog to help me calm down when other people around me are upset or arguing.' Ask students to provide a few more examples.

2. Arrange for students to work in small groups to create 3 different physical 'freeze-frames'. Each freeze frame should depict one of the strategies they like to use to help them calm down when they are upset, anxious, afraid or angry. (Alternatively, have students complete 3 quick sketches or jot down some words to describe their 'calming' strategies.)

3. Invite students to share one of their strategies with the class. They should share a strategy that they believe is helpful, and not hurtful or harmful to anyone else.

4. Develop and display a class list of positive 'self-calming' strategies. You can refer to the 'Checklist of coping strategies' if needed to complete this class list.

5. Distribute or display the 'My self-calming strategies' prompts.

   Ask students to complete the task by naming at least 2 different calming strategies that they can use when they feel sad, angry, lonely, frightened or worried.

   Encourage students to think of as many different positive strategies as they can. They can also consider which self-calming strategies are best to use at school.

   Emphasise that we all need a variety of calming strategies. This means we can choose the one that best suits the person, the place, the time, the situation and the emotions. Some strategies will work at home, but we may need different ones for when we are at school or out in the community.

Review

Review the learning intentions and highlight that there are lots of different reasons why someone might feel stressed, and that things that distress one person may not cause stress for another. It all depends on who you are and how many challenging things are happening all at once. Invite students to share a positive calming strategy that might be appropriate to use either at home, in class or in the playground.

Coaching point:

Different stressors, different strategies. Remind students that different people can find different things stressful. What worries one person might be fun for another. Some students find too much noise and movement stressful, while others may not. Some people find it bothersome when changes happen, and other people like change. People can also have different preferences in relation to the coping strategies that work best for them. It is useful to ask people what they find helpful when they feel stressed.

My self-calming strategies

When I feel sad	I can ... ***or*** I can ...
When I feel angry	I can ... ***or*** I can ...
When I feel lonely	I can ... ***or*** I can ...
When I feel frightened	I can ... ***or*** I can ...
When I feel worried	I can ... ***or*** I can ...

Checklist of coping strategies

Go for a run	Read a funny story	Ride a bike	Play a computer game	Play with friends
Bounce on the trampoline	Go for a swim and splash a lot	Watch TV	Make something	Play an imaginary game
Cuddle someone you love	Lie on your bed	have a bath or shower	Eat something delicious	Listen to some music
Go to the park	Write about it	Play sport	Talk to someone	Tidy your room
Draw a picture	Read a book	Help your parent/carer	Ring your grandparent or trusted adult	Play a favourite game
Have a drink of water	Wash your face	Take some deep breaths	Sing a song	Pat a pet

Topic 05

Activity 2: Strategies for self-calming

Learning intentions

- Students will practise self-calming games and relaxation techniques.
- Students will describe ways that self-calming techniques can help their bodies to relax.

Equipment

- Gentle or meditative music

Method

Part A: Slow-motion Giant Mirror Game

1. Explain that we are going to play the Slow-motion Giant Mirror Game to help us focus on self-control and self-calming.

   Organise students into pairs, standing facing each other. Ask the shorter person to be 'A' and the other to be 'B'.

2. Explain that in this game, the aim is to work with your partner to create a perfect mirror reflection. However, this is a slow-motion mirror, so all movements in this mirror must be done in slow motion. In the first round, A will be the leader and B will be the mirrored reflection. With pairs facing each other, A will begin to move and B will start to copy every action like a reflection.

   Once the partners have had a chance to play, ask them to swap roles so that B becomes the leader and A becomes the mirror.

3. After the activity, ask students:
   - What skills did you need to use to play the game successfully?
   - What messages did the game contain that relate to good friendship?
   - What messages did the game contain that relate to help-seeking and/or peer support? (Among other responses, students may note the skills of self-control and observation. They may note the importance of paying close attention to others, or 'tuning in' to them as part of good friendship. They may note the importance of sending clear signals that others can follow when asking for help or referring others for help.)

4. Issue a challenge to play the 'Advanced Slow-motion Mirror Game'. In this variation of the game, the whole class becomes the mirror for you, as the leader. As you lead a slow, sustained pattern of calming movements, students aim to remain a faithful mirror of you. Once you have established the game, you can pass the leadership to another student, and they in turn can call a name to pass it on.

5. After the game, ask the class:
   - What skills did you use to help you work as a whole class team in that game?
   - How and when do we need to call on these same skills so we can create a classroom that is good for everyone to learn in?
   - How do we usually show self-control in the classroom?
   - What can we do to help keep our classroom a peaceful place for people to work?

6. Point out that the Slow-motion Giant Mirror Game has shown students that they can all calm down at the same time, and that they can work in harmony together.

Part B: Relaxation techniques

1. Explain: 'We are going to try a relaxation exercise. Relaxation exercises help us to calm our emotional stress levels and let go of the accompanying tension in our bodies.'

   Arrange for students to lie down on their backs, or to sit squarely in their chairs, if space does not allow for them to lie down.

2. First describe the process: 'We are going to use the 'ice to water' activity. First, we will clench our muscles so they are tight and hard like a block of ice, then we will let go and imagine our muscles melting into a soft pool. During the activity we will think about how our stomachs feel, what our muscles are doing, and what it feels like inside our heads.'

   Then request the following of students:
   - Shake your whole body nervously for 10 seconds.
   - Stiffen your body like a board and don't let it move for 10 seconds.
   - Let your body go and imagine yourself melting into the floor or chair, with all your muscles warming and relaxing and stretching out.
   - Take a few slow, deep breaths in, and slow, deep breaths out. Listen to your heartbeat. Now scrunch up hard like a frozen block of ice again. Hold your muscles tight. Now relax and melt again. Take a few slow, deep breaths in, and slow, deep breaths out. Listen to a sound that is very far away. Now wiggle your toes and fingers. Open your eyes and slowly sit or stand up.

3. Ask students to share with someone next to them how they felt. Collect some responses from the class.

   Ask: 'Where or when could you use this relaxation exercise?'

4. Ask students to share ideas about things they like to do to help them relax or calm themselves.

   Try the activity again with some quiet music. Ask students to report on which they preferred – with or without music.

   Ask students to put up their hands if they think it would be good to do an activity like this again.

Review

Review the learning intentions and ask students how regularly practising relaxation or self-calming strategies like slow, deep breathing might help them lead a healthy life.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- What do you like to do to relax and reduce your own stress levels?
- Can you recognise the varying signs of stress in students?
- How do you provide opportunities for tension reduction in the classroom?

Extension activities

- Share and sample some music that would be good to use during a relaxation exercise.
- Draw a picture that means 'relaxation' to you.

Talking further

- Talk to those at home about the kinds of stresses they faced when they were at school. What coping strategies did they use?

Topic 06 Help-seeking

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- practise communication skills that enhance peer support and help-seeking
- identify a range of help-seeking strategies to negotiate positive outcomes to problems
- discuss the concept of peer support and identify situations where it is appropriate to adopt this role
- describe and apply strategies that can be used in situations that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Content Advice

Some of the activities in this topic contain content that may be sensitive for some students. It is important to provide content advice in advance of lessons as well as at the commencement of a class. See the Introduction page 15 to this resource for further guidance on providing content advice.

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

The help-seeking behaviours of children and young people are fundamental to their mental health and wellbeing. Encouraging and fostering help-seeking behaviours is one way to improve mental health and wellbeing.[38] There are several barriers that children and young people can face when it comes to help-seeking, including embarrassment, shame, fear of making things worse, fear of getting into trouble, lack of confidence to initiate conversations with an adult, anxiety about not being believed, and lack of knowledge about who to approach.[38] Additionally, research shows that those who are in the most need of help for psychological distress may be least able to seek it, due to the burdens affecting their emotional competence and confidence at that time.[39] Therefore, it is important to work with students to identify the situations where help from appropriate adults is warranted, make sure they are aware about help-seeking avenues, and ensure they feel confident to persist in seeking help from appropriate sources when needed.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Advise students that in the following lessons they will focus on help-seeking. This means discussing scenarios where peers are concerned about what is happening to a friend or classmate. The scenarios include situations where someone is feeling distressed, such as when they have problems at home, with friends or with school. They will focus on how to help others, and how to seek help. They will also learn about the different kinds of help available in the school and beyond. Remind students that it will be important to make sure the class is a friendly and supportive place while they work on this topic. Revisit the class ground rules or agreements about respectful behaviour. (See guidance in the 'teaching sensitive topics' section of the Introduction.)

Sample script for content advice for Topic 6:

Across the next few lessons we will talk about ways to seek help or to help others. We will talk about situations where people are distressed because they have been left out, or hurt by others, or worried about something that has gone wrong. We will learn about this because we want to make sure we know how to help our friends or to ask for help if this sort of thing happens.

Sometimes, when we hear a story about someone being unsafe, or hurt, it might make us feel a bit wobbly inside. Before we start each lesson, I will let you know if there will be scenarios about children who have been hurt, left out or called mean names.

If you find that the lessons make you feel upset or wobbly, your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else, here at school or at home, and that is also okay.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Topic 06

Activity 1: Communication and help-seeker scenarios

Learning intentions

- Students will describe strategies they can use to support friends and seek help.

Equipment

- Mime cards
- 'Help--seeking scenario' cards (one set per group)
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices

Coaching point:
Protective interrupting. Protective interrupting is also a strategy that teachers can use, in an assertive and respectful way, to interrupt students who begin to disclose private or sensitive information about themselves or others. It is a teaching strategy designed to protect the person telling the story from disclosing in front of the class (redirecting students to a more supported context for disclosure instead), other people in the story from having their experiences discussed in a public setting, students from experiencing any distress at hearing the disclosure, and the fidelity of the lesson. If a student begins to disclose private information about themselves or others in the group space, respectfully interrupt the student by acknowledging their contribution and preventing further disclosure, for example, 'Thank you. It sounds as though you have something important to talk about. Let's chat about this after the lesson when we can talk properly.' Prioritise meeting with the student(s) in a more private, safe space within the school as soon as possible.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: Mimed Messages Game

1. Explain that the class will play a game to think about how we communicate with others when we are under pressure. Divide the class into groups of 5 or 6. Ask each group to form a queue behind their leader, with each student facing the back of the person in front of them. Explain that in this game, students will be playing a 'mime relay'. (Model an example of a mime before you begin the game.)

   Each group leader will have their own action to mime and each group member will have a chance to watch the mime passed along the line to them by the person immediately in front of them. Once they have seen the mime, they will turn to repeat it for the person behind them. The aim is to preserve and pass on as much of the original mime as possible. The last person in the line will perform the mime for the leader, and then guess what the mimed action was about. (Check that the last person in the line feels comfortable to take on the role of mime, and if not, organise a volunteer to take on this role.)

   To start the game, ask all members of the line to turn to face the opposite way to the leader. Show a different action card to each of the leaders of the groups. Once shown the card, the leaders have 10 seconds to think about how they might represent the action through mime.

2. Give the leaders a cue to begin. Each leader will turn to the person behind them and tap them on the shoulder to prompt them to turn around to watch the mime. After seeing it performed, group member number 2 then taps the shoulder of the next person in line, who turns to watch person 2 perform the same mime – aiming to be as true to the original as possible.

   The process is repeated until each member in the team has had a chance to watch the mime.

3. Once all the groups have completed this process, the final person from each group comes out the front and performs the mime they saw in front of the whole group. This student will then guess what action they believe they were performing (for example, hanging out washing, or making a fire).

   In response, the leader then comes out and performs the original mime and reveals the action they were aiming to represent (as written on their action card), highlighting the changes that may have taken place as the mime was passed along the chain.

4. After the game, ask students:
   - What cooperation and communication skills did we need to use to play the game?
   - What messages does this game contain that relate to the challenge of help-seeking?

5. Reinforce the importance of creating clear and accurate messages when asking for help. If people do not understand our needs clearly, they may not be able to help us.

Part B: Help-seeking scenarios

1. Inform students:

   In this next activity we will talk about some problems our friends or peers might have. We'll work out what can be done to address them and how to help other people, including our friends. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

   Organise students randomly into groups of 4 or 5. If possible, groups should sit in a circle.

   Give each group a set of 'Help-seeker scenarios' (or develop your own).

   Tell the group that their job is to think about possible helping or help-seeking actions they could take in a range of situations involving children experiencing distress.

2. Use one scenario as a model and complete it with the class.

   Demonstrate how to lay the scenario cards facedown in a circle with room inside to spin a pencil. In turn, each person in the group can spin the pencil and read aloud the card that the pencil points to. They should then work as a group to discuss what people could do in that situation.

3. When the task is finished, gather the groups together and invite each group to share their response to one of the scenarios, explaining why they recommend that response. After all groups have had a chance to share, ask:

   - Which of the scenarios was the easiest to deal with?
   - Which scenario was the hardest to deal with? Why?

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

4. Tell students, 'In our next lesson, we will be working out what we can do to seek help if a friend or classmate is experiencing a serious problem.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

5. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

Review

Review the learning intentions and ask students to explain how it has helped them to think of different strategies they can use to seek help when they are worried about a situation or feel unsafe.

Coaching point:
Normalising help-seeking. When peers identify the importance of help-seeking, propose sources of help, and identify strategies for peer-referral, they help to establish positive social norms and to destigmatise help-seeking.

Coaching point:
Help-seeking. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from religious or diverse cultural backgrounds, and LGBTIQA+ students may be less likely to seek help if they anticipate that the help-services will not understand their cultural needs, belief systems or identities.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

MIME CARDS

Cleaning your teeth	Spreading butter on your toast
Pouring a drink and drinking it	Opening a present
Finding a stone in your shoe	Crossing a busy road

Help-seeking scenarios

Scenario 1:

Ahn sometimes gets teased and laughed at for having short, dark hair. Some girls with long ponytails say mean things about her haircut. The teacher doesn't know this is happening because no one teases Ahn when the teacher is listening.

- What could other students do to help?
- What could Ahn do?
- Who could Ahn ask to help?

Scenario 2:

Koa's little brother Waru starts crying while he and Koa are walking to school. Koa learns it is because Waru is having a bad time at school – his classmates keep telling him they don't want him to play with them anymore. Koa knows it is important to help people. He tells Waru not to worry – he will help with some ideas about what to do.

- What could Koa do that might help Waru?
- Who could Koa or Waru ask to help?
- What could friends do to help?

Scenario 3:

Shashi was really upset because some other students called her cousin racist names about her skin colour. So she told the teacher, and the teacher gave the class some suggestions about what to do if this happens again. The teacher also gave ideas about what other students could do to help. (Racist names are mean, unfair and hurtful ways of saying something about someone's skin colour or their family culture.)

- What might the teachers have suggested that friends could do to help ?
- What might the teachers have suggested that students could do if something like that happens to them?

Scenario 4:

Elif plays with older kids who live in the same street. One day they create a new game that involves throwing stones at passing cars. They tell Elif he should try it with them. He knows it's dangerous and wrong, but he's scared they won't be friends anymore if he doesn't join in.

- What could other friends do to help?
- What could Elif do?
- Who could Elif ask to help?

Scenario 5:

Haasim is finding it hard to concentrate in class. He's upset because his parents have been fighting and have said that they are going to split up.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could Haasim do?
- Who could Haasim ask to help?

Help-seeking scenarios

Scenario 6:

Chun is worried about asking their parent for excursion money because their family is having money problems.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could Chun do?
- Who could Chun ask to help?

Scenario 7:

Emmi finds that some money has been taken from her school bag while everyone was in class.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could Emmi do?
- Who could Emmi ask to help?

Scenario 8:

Max sometimes finds the playground too noisy and the games too fast, especially when lots of other students are running very close to him. This can sometimes make him feel really stressed and overwhelmed, and then it's hard to concentrate when he goes back into class. What he prefers is to play inside and do puzzles, board games and quiet activities.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could Max do?
- Who could Max ask to help?

Scenario 9:

Farida left her lunch at home.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could Farida do?
- Who could Farida ask to help?

Scenario 10:

Some Year 4 students see a group of older students run through the sandpit and knock over the castles that the Year 1 students had made. The older students laugh and run off. The next day this happens again.

- What could friends do to help?
- What could the Year 4 students do?
- Who could they ask to help?

Topic 06

Activity 2: How big is the problem?

Learning intentions

- Students will describe why it is important to seek help from an adult for serious problems.
- Students will identify which problems are serious enough to mean that it is important to seek help from an adult.

Equipment

- 'How big is the problem?' worksheet (display the scale on a screen or draw it on the board)
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today, we are going to think about how serious or small a problem is, because that will help us to know when it's important to seek help from others or not. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Ask:

   - How do we know whether a problem is 'serious' or not?
   - How do we know whether we should involve other people in helping us to solve it?

   Collect students' ideas and examples.

3. Share the following questions. These can be used to help us think through how serious a situation is (display these questions on the board).

   - Does it hurt or upset anyone?
   - Is it unfair?
   - Does it break the rules?
   - Does it make the school an unfriendly place?
   - Does it stop people learning?
   - Could it get worse if you did nothing?
   - Could it get worse if other people did not help?

4. Explain to students that you will be reading out several problems and you want them to decide if they think they are small, medium or serious problems. They will vote by showing the size of the problem with their bodies. If the problem seems small they will bob down low, if it seems medium, they will stand, and if it seems serious they will stretch their hands up high. Remind students that some people will have different ideas. For example, a spider landing on your bed might be a big problem for some people and small problem for others!

5. Invite students to stand, then read them examples of problems from the set provided, asking students to vote in response to each example.

6. Ask students to comment on what they noticed from the voting patterns. Ask, 'Why it is important for people to be able to work out if a problem is serious or not?'

   Explain that some problems start small, but because they go on and on for a long time, they become more serious. Some problems are serious because they cause hurt or harm. Some problems are serious because they make the school an unfriendly place or stop people from learning.

   One way we try to stop some of these problems from happening is to have rules. But we also need helping hands, and people who will take action when things go wrong or when the safety or learning rules are broken.

   Refer to the earlier activities on personal strengths (Topic 2). Ask students what strengths they need to call on to take help-seeking action when a problem is more serious.

7. Introduce the idea of scaling by drawing a scale to represent the increasing seriousness of a problem. (For example, use the metaphor of a thermometer or a flight of stairs.) Explain to students that it can be helpful to tell someone how serious their problem is by telling them it feels like a big problem.

8. Introduce the notion of a timeline by looking at a ruler. Explain that some problems don't seem to go away, and that if they last a longer time, that is also a signal it is time to tell a helpful adult. Explain to students that useful ways to tell a helpful adult about a problem include telling them it has been going on for a long time, or it just won't go away.
9. Put students in groups of 3 to 4. Give each group a copy of the 'How big is the problem?' list and ask them to work together to rate the seriousness of the problems by bundling the problems into categories of big, medium and small.

   Groups select one member to provide feedback about a problem from each of the 3 levels (small, medium and serious).
10. Reinforce the importance of taking help-seeking actions when a problem is hurtful, unfair or could escalate. Use the guiding questions to assist in this reflection. Help students to think of the longer-term consequences if this does not happen.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

11. Inform students:

    'In the next lesson, we will think about who we help and who we may trust to help us.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you, or to another teacher or their helpers, to get some support.
12. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

Review

Review the learning intentions by inviting students to reflect on what they have learnt.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

‘How big is the problem?’ worksheet

Read each problem, then write a number out of 10 to show how serious you think it is. Put a question mark if you are not sure.	
	You spill your drink on your clothes.
	You spill your drink into the computer and it stops working.
	You lose your pen.
	You lose your parent’s mobile phone.
	You have no one to play with during one lunch break.
	You have no one to play with for 2 weeks.
	You feel tired in class.
	You feel sick in class and think you will throw up.
	You are late for school one day because the car wouldn’t start.
	You are late for school most days because your family has lots of problems.
	You don’t understand what the teacher said.
	You often don’t understand what the teacher says and this means you can’t start your work.
	You get into trouble for talking to your friend in class.
	You get into trouble every lesson for being mean to another student.
	You find a spider in your shoe when you are getting dressed.
	You notice your baby sibling eating a live spider.

Topic 06

Activity 3: Help-seeking sources

Learning intentions

- Students will identify people they can turn to for help if needed.
- Students will identify people they are able to help.

Equipment

- 'Helping hands' handout
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   It is important to know who we can ask for help. Today we are going to think about people at home and at school who we could go to for help. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Ask:
   - How do we know when a problem is getting too large or is too large to manage alone?
   - If the problem is too large, what can the person do? (Reinforce that they could seek help from someone they trust.)

3. Show the image of the 2 'Helping hands'. Explain that one hand will be used to show the names of people they can help. The other will show the names of people they can go to when they need help (or when they are worried that a friend or family member needs help). These helpers could include a parent, teacher, friend, sibling, grandparent, relative or family friend.

4. Ask each person to draw around their hand in their notebooks to create their helping hands, adding in the names of people they have identified.

5. Invite students to report back on some of their examples.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

6. Inform students:

   'In our next lesson, we will practise asking for help by acting out some help-seeking situations.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

7. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concern or worried response, demonstrated a changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

Review

Review the learning intentions, inviting students to share how they have shown that they can ask for help and that they can help others.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

HELPING HANDS
Worksheet

5 people who I can help

5 people who can help me

Topic 06

Activity 4: Help-seeking role-plays

Learning intentions

- Students will practise ways to seek help.
- Students will identify that they may need to help-seek more than once to get the help they need.

Equipment

- 'Can you help me?' role-play scenarios
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today we are going to practise asking for help by acting out some help-seeking situations. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Sometimes we need to be able to tell people how we feel, particularly when we are experiencing very strong negative emotions or when we face difficult situations. Sometimes strong emotions are a sign that we have a problem and need some help. While it is good to use our own coping strategies, we also need to know when and how to ask for help.

3. Ask students to suggest what they think someone needs to say when they ask for help. Aim to build a list that includes the phrases:

a. Tell the person you need help.

b. Name the problem.

c. Say how it makes you feel.

d. Ask if they can help.

4. Ask students to work in pairs or threes. Allocate (or let them choose) one of the 'Can you help me?' scenarios. Ask students to:
   - restate the problem in their own words
   - choose who this person could ask for help
   - work out what they could say to the person they approach for help
   - work out what they could do or say if the person being asked for help was too busy or was not helpful.

5. Allow time for students to design and prepare 2 short role-plays, one that shows a good response from the help giver, and one that shows a poor response from the help giver.
   - Arrange for students to perform their role-plays. After each role-play, ask:
   - What has the help seeker done well in asking for help?
   - Has the help seeker identified the problem?
   - Have they got their message across clearly?
   - What else could they do or say?

6. After finishing the role-plays, discuss the process of asking for help. Ask:
   - What does it take to go and ask for help? (For example, courage, confidence, sense of fairness, knowledge of who to ask, kindness – like when asking for help for someone else – determination, honesty or hope.)
   - What is it like if you get an unhelpful response? (For example, you might feel hurt, disappointed, anxious, angry, or feel like giving up.)
   - What strengths do you need to draw on in that situation? (For example, courage, kindness – such as when asking for help for someone else – determination, honesty or hope.)
   - What could you do if the first person you go to for help is not actually helpful? Which strengths might you need to use to keep trying with someone else?

7. Inform students:

   'In our next lesson, we will write and share a story about help-seeking.'

   Remind students that if at any time something worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

8. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal

that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concern or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

Review

Review the learning intentions, inviting students to share a short reflection on what they have learnt from this activity.

Coaching point:
Building confidence to show role-plays. If class members feel uncomfortable about presenting their role-plays, work up to it by arranging for half the class to perform their scene at once, while the others observe these multiple 'scenes' at once. Then swap while the other half has a turn. Repeat, but with 2 or 3 scenes playing simultaneously, then eventually work up to taking short looks at individual scenes. Observing multiple scenes at once can also be helpful when time is short, and all students want a chance to show their scene before the lesson ends.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

‘Can you help me?’ role-play

You need help with your homework. It is really hard.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

You see some prep students throwing sand and yelling in the sandpit.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

No one will play with you. You have been sitting by yourself every lunchtime this week.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

You’ve been away sick and don’t know how to do the new maths problems.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Your parent or carer didn’t arrive to pick you up after school.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Your ball went over the fence to next door and you don’t know what to do.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

You are lost in the shopping centre. You can’t find your cousin.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Someone is doing something that is making you feel scared.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Your best friend won’t talk to you anymore.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

A friend is trying to force you to do something that you know is wrong.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

You forgot to bring your lunch to school.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

A classmate makes racist comments about people’s skin colour.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

You fall off the play equipment and hurt your arm badly.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Sometimes you are hungry at school because your family has money problems and they can’t always afford to buy enough food.

- Who will you ask for help?
- What could you say?

Topic 06

Activity 5: Help-seeking stories

Learning intentions

- Students will write and share a story about help-seeking that includes details about the emotions the character felt, and the coping strategies and strengths they used.

Equipment

- Pens, pencils and notebooks or paper, or digital devices
- Picture storybook template

Method

1. Explain that students will work to write an 8-page story for younger children to help them to learn how to cope with a challenge that produces a negative emotion like anger, fear, sadness or loneliness. Ask students to think of situations involving change or challenge that younger children might experience and find hard to deal with. Make a list on the board. Examples could include being bullied or starting at a new school.
2. Give students the picture storybook template to plan their story. Explain the template by creating an example and reading it to the class. Emphasise that their story will include:

a. an introduction to the character

b. a description of the challenge or upsetting situation

c. their emotional reaction

d. their bodily reaction to the upset

e. an action they used to cope which did not work

f. a help-seeking action that did work

g. how they carried out the advice

h. the happier ending.

3. Ask students to choose an animal that will be their central character.
4. Draw the template on the board. Remind students that the pictures will be part of the story and should help to make it easy for younger children to understand.
5. Organise students into groups of 2 to 4 to share their stories with each other. Model, then direct students to use the template to give feedback on each student's story concept.
6. Provide time in the next sessions for students to complete their stories or images, and share them with peers, parents or carers or younger students, as appropriate.

Review

Provide students with the opportunity to reflect on these story-writing and story-telling experiences. Ask students to identify key messages they have learnt and passed on about emotional responses, positive coping, help-seeking and persistence.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- Who could you talk to if you needed help dealing with an issue?
- In what ways do you encourage students to seek your assistance and each other's assistance in the classroom?
- How do you encourage help-seeking and the provision of support for others?

Extension activities

- Invite students to write a poem, song, rap or short play that highlights how to cope when times are tough.
- Invite students to describe the help-seeking or help-providing strategies characters use in the stories they are reading.

Talking further

- Encourage students to share their helping hands with their 5 trusted people.
- Suggest that students ask their family members who they talk to when they want help with things.
- Ask students to work with their parents or carers to create a family helping hand to display at home.

‘Picture storybook’ template

Write and illustrate an 8-page storybook for a younger child using this template.

Page 1

Page 1 will introduce your character. This character should be an animal.

Page 2

Decide on the *bad experience* that happened to your character.

(For example, somebody was mean to them, they lost something, or they felt afraid of something.)

Page 3

Explain the *emotions* they felt in response.

Example emotions:

Sad
Angry
Scared
Hurt
Surprised
Disappointed

Page 4

Think about how this made their body feel.

Example reactions:

Shaky
Fast heart beat
Sore tummy
Shivers
Sweaty
Hot face
Crying
Headache

Page 5

Outline how they asked for advice (but this did not work out).

Page 6

Explain how they tried again, asking a different animal for advice. Include the good advice that was given.

Example strategies:

Ask a teacher for help.
Take deep breaths until you are calm.
Find a safe place to play.
Tell your parent/s or carer about it.
Walk away.
Ask some older kids to help.
Run around the playground.

Page 7

Show how your character took this good advice – and how this time it worked out well!

Page 8

Talk about the emotions they feel now that they have taken this action.

Example emotions:

happy
excited
proud
comfortable
relieved
hopeful
included
brave

Topic 07 Gender norms and stereotypes

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- analyse their multifaceted identities
- differentiate between the terms 'sex' and 'gender'
- identify the limiting or harmful effects of some gender norms
- identify the enabling effects of positive gender norms
- develop awareness of the ways that gender stereotypes in media and literature influence gender norms
- challenge negative gender norms experienced in their own school or community contexts.

Content Advice

Some of the activities in this topic contain content that may be sensitive for some students. It is important to provide content advice in advance of lessons as well as at the commencement of a class. See the Introduction page 15 to this resource for further guidance on providing content advice.

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

Studies show that school-based social and emotional learning, respectful relationships education and other violence prevention initiatives can make a real difference, producing lasting change in attitudes and behaviours in students [40-43]. Providing comprehensive classroom programs to all students is a key part of a school's whole-of-school approach to preventing gender-based violence and promoting positive relationships.[44] Research shows that children become aware of gender at an early age, are well aware of gender norms, and are making efforts to fit within gendered expectations by the time they are in kindergarten [45]. As young children learn about gender, they may also begin to enact sexist values, or stereotypical beliefs and attitudes [45, 46]. They may, for example, insist that some games are for boys and others for girls, and actively reject peers of a different gender from certain games. This means that it is important to begin building positive gender relationships within these early years. Classroom activities can be used to help children to challenge stereotypes, to value and show respect for diversity and difference, and to learn how to apply respectful and inclusive attitudes within positive gender relationships.

An inclusive or 'gender-complex' approach can be used to challenge the oppression and disadvantage that arise from negative gender norms and in response to the gender binary.[47] In the past, it was common for educators to employ 'gender-stereotypical' approaches that replicated the gender binary and associated expectations by assigning different roles and opportunities for girls and boys. As gender equality movements drew attention to the importance of equal opportunities for girls and boys, it was not uncommon for teachers to seek a 'gender-free' or 'gender-blind' approach, whereby the teacher sought to be fair by ignoring gender. However, with this approach, dominant patterns tended to persist because steps were not taken to recognise and address inequality or positions of relative privilege or disadvantage.

Subsequently, 'gender-sensitive' approaches were developed. Gender-sensitive approaches allow teachers to devise differential strategies to counteract inequity. However, this approach tends to operate within a gender binary, and may fail to recognise diversity of gender and sexuality. For those who do not fit within the dominant binary identities or gender-conforming norms, this can lead to a continuation of experiences of exclusion, devaluing or discrimination.

Within a 'gender-complex' approach, a teacher employs strategies from a gender-sensitive approach but becomes additionally alert to the ways heteronormative and binary boy/girl or man/woman classifications can work to exclude or stigmatise those who do not fit neatly within these membership categories. To interrupt this trend, they intentionally use inclusive approaches that offer recognition, normalisation and respect of all genders, including non-binary gender identities and those who do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth.[47]

Topic 07

Activity 1: My individuality – The many facets of me

Learning intentions

- Students will explore what makes them similar and different from others.
- Students will learn that people of any gender can be similar and/or different.
- Students will learn that it is okay to have different interests from their peers.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Human bingo' handouts
- 'Identity wheel' handouts (complete one before class to use as an example)
- Colour wheel (access a YouTube clip to demonstrate)
- Pens, pencils and notebooks, or digital devices

Method

Part A: 'Human bingo' (a diversity research game)

1. Distribute the 'Human bingo' sheet. Explain that playing this game will help us to learn more about our similarities and differences.
2. Explain how to play the game. Students have a few minutes to move around, asking the questions and finding one person per box on the sheet who can give 'yes' as the answer. They can only enter a person's name once on the sheet. Encourage students to complete every box.
3. After the game, bring students together and ask:
   - What have you learnt about each other from playing the game?
   - Was there something surprising or new that you learnt about anyone?
   - Did you find any surprising similarities between you and others?
   - Did you find any surprising differences?
4. Build on the experience of human bingo to point out that there are many things that make us who we are – our likes, dislikes, experiences, strengths, abilities, bodies and cultural and religious backgrounds. These are different parts of who we are. Sometimes we call this our 'individuality'. Each of us is constantly growing and changing in many ways.
5. Over time, we might change some of our likes and dislikes and get new strengths, interests and skills. It is good for us to understand that everyone is a little bit different. While we have some things in common with others, we also have differences. This too is something to be proud of. We can be proud to be the same and proud to be different. Being different is also something to enjoy and respect in others. We can appreciate and respect the ways people are similar to us and appreciate and respect the ways people are different from us.

Coaching point:
Be on alert for gender policing. It is important to challenge sexist, homophobic and transphobic comments whenever they arise in discussions or informal conversations at school. Prior to activities, anticipate possible student comments that might seek to police the choices of other students along gender-stereotypical lines. (For example, 'There are no set colours for girls, for boys or for gender-diverse people. People can like whatever colour they choose. And they can change their minds. We need to be able to let our friends enjoy their own preferences.')

Part B: My identity wheel

1. Explain that the next activity will allow us to share our interests and preferences. Everyone will complete an 'identity wheel' – a tool designed to record and share different sorts of information about ourselves. It is not big enough to let us share everything about ourselves, but it is going to be big enough to show different things about us, show our individuality, and allow us to learn about the similarities and differences between people in the class.
2. Use a completed version of the attached identity wheel to demonstrate how students can populate the 8 different categories – home, friendship, play, school, relaxation, coping, strengths and futures – with information about their likes and preferences.

   For example, a teacher might choose to emphasise something like, 'You can see here in the learning section on my wheel that I really like learning about maths and science. I also like learning to dance. It's sometimes tricky and it's tiring because you need to use your whole body, but it's also exciting. In my futures section you can see that one day I want to travel to Africa to see a wild elephant.'

   Or, 'You can see here in the learning section on my wheel that I really like to learn new recipes from around the world because I love to cook. I also like rock climbing because it's hard and scary and you need to use your strength. In my futures section, you can see that one day I want to visit the great art galleries in France and Italy because I love to paint.'

   As you talk through the wheel, point out that each category is an important part of our identity.
3. Provide time for students to work independently on their identity wheels. (They may need extended time across some sessions to complete this task.)

Coaching point:
Positive role modelling. Sharing aspects of your own identity provides an opportunity for you to do some positive role modelling, using appropriate examples from your own life. Aim to share some non-gender-stereotypical aspects of your identity.

4. Assemble the class to share the identity wheels. You may prefer to arrange this as a gallery walk around the class, with students introducing their work prior to a class discussion. Or, you might ask students to share their work in small groups.
5. Once students have had a chance to share their work, invite them to comment on the similarities and differences they have noticed. (Assist with some of your own observations as needed.)
   - Who found some similarities?
   - Who found some differences?

   Seek comments on any patterns found within and across genders. Ask:
   - Are there any differences when we compare the wheels made by students of different genders?
   - Are there any similarities when we compare the wheels made by students of different genders?
6. Challenge students to recognise that they do not have to be restricted in their preferences based on common gendered patterns. Draw on examples from the data. Provide statements and questions like:
   - Some people like soccer. Can people of any gender enjoy playing soccer?
   - Some people like painting and playing dress-ups. Can people of any gender like painting and dress-ups?
   - Can someone like soccer and painting and dress-ups?

   If you encounter resistance (like 'boys don't play with dolls'), explore this resistance with further questions:
   - Can a boy play with dolls if he wants to?
   - Can a girl wear a superman suit if she wants to? Can I wear a superman suit if I can find one my size?
   - Do we have to agree if someone says you can't do something just because of your gender?
   - How might others feel if we start making rules like this for them?
7. Assign some extra time and invite students to add things to their identity wheels that show the *variety* in their interests, as well as the main preferences they have already included.
8. Show students a colour wheel. Ask if they know what happens when you spin a colour wheel. Show them a YouTube clip demonstrating what happens. When they have noted that the wheel may look white while spinning, but is actually made up of lots of colours, you can explain that people are a bit like colour wheels. We can look at them and think we know what they are like (like how we think the colour wheel is white when we spin it). But when we slow down and get to know others better, we can see different parts of their personality and life (like the different colours we can observe on the colour wheel when it is still). We can enjoy the ways that we are similar to others, and we can enjoy the ways that we are different from others.

Throughout the discussion and at the conclusion of the activity, emphasise:

- There are lots of aspects to our identities.
- The more spokes we have in our identity wheels, the stronger and more resilient we can be.
- We have lots of interests.
- We like to learn new things.
- We can express ourselves in many different ways.
- We value and respect how different people can be.
- We like to learn about how people are different as well as about how they are similar to us.
- We understand that some gender labels are limiting, and that all people should be treated equally, regardless of gender.

Seek opportunities to highlight these points when relevant during the school day.

Review

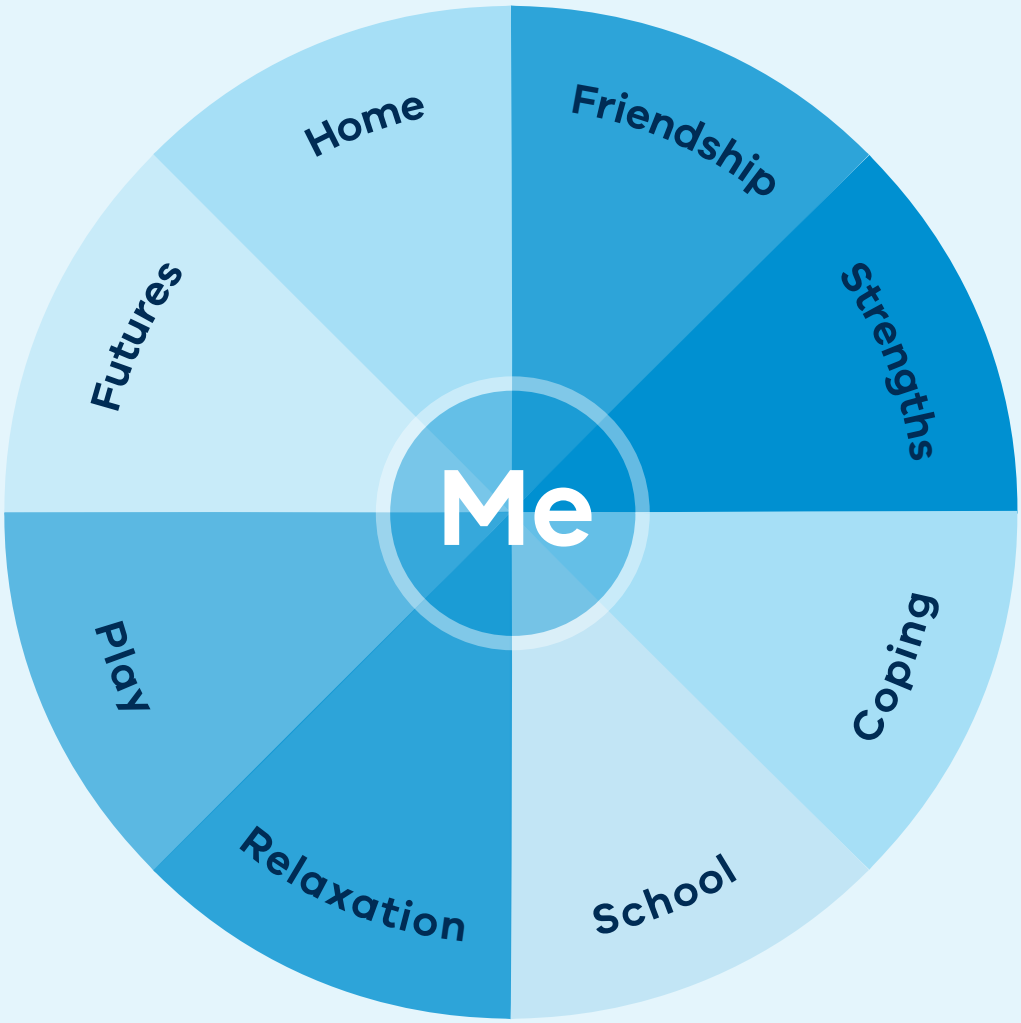
To conclude the lesson and review the learning intentions, invite students to consider:

- Why is it important to learn about some of the similarities and differences between students in the class?
- Why is it important to appreciate and respect differences between people?
- How can we show appreciation and respect for each other's differences and preferences?

HUMAN BINGO

Someone who has the same length hair as you	Someone who is about the same height as you	Someone who likes bananas
Someone who likes loud music	Someone who has a different favourite colour from you	Someone who likes ball games
Someone with a different favourite food from you	Someone who likes to play on the climbing equipment	Someone who has the same favourite game as you
Someone who was born in a different country from you	Someone who has the same length hair as you	Someone who has the same number of siblings as you
Someone who likes to draw	Someone who likes to read	Someone who smiles a lot

My identity wheel



Some questions to help you think about different parts of your self			
Home: I live with others. Who I help at home: Who helps me at home: Things I like to do at home:	**Friendship: I am a friend.** I like to play: How I help my friends:	**Strengths: I have strengths.** Some strengths I have: Some strengths I want to grow or improve:	**Coping: I can cope** When I am down or worried, these things cheer me up: When I have a problem, it helps when I:
School: I like to learn. I would like to learn more about: These people help me learn:	**Relaxation: I can relax.** When I want to relax or calm down, I like to: To help calm other people down, I sometimes:	**Play: I can be active.** Active games or sport I like to play are: I like to be active when:	**Futures: I have dreams about my future.** One day I would like to:

Topic 07

Activity 2: Exploring gender stereotypes through stories

Informed by the evidence base

Societies create the types of behaviours considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for girls and boys ('gender norms'). Gender norms influence beliefs about how girls and boys should act, speak, dress and express themselves. Children learn these norms and expectations from an early age, influencing the roles, attitudes, aspirations and behaviours they adopt [45, 46, 48]. Gender norms are often reinforced through popular television shows and storybooks.[49, 50] For example, analyses of popular books have found that central characters are more likely to be men or boys, while women or girls are commonly minor characters who perform nurturing roles, and in general, occupations are gender stereotyped.[49, 50] Researchers have noted that such disparities reproduce and legitimate gender inequalities. They can lead to a sense of entitlement in boys and lower self-esteem in girls.[49, 50] Children benefit from critical-thinking exercises that assist them to detect and challenge the limiting nature of many traditional gender norms [48].

Learning intentions

- Students will describe the roles commonly given to men and women in traditional fairy tales.
- Students will describe some gender differences they see in modern children's stories or films.
- Students will learn that children and adults are free to choose their interests and roles, and this does not depend on their gender.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Fairytale for shared reading
- Selection of traditional fairytales (for example, Cinderella, Snow White and Rapunzel) for group work
- 'Fairytale detective' task sheets
- Children's storybooks that work to challenge gender norms
- Pens, pencils and notebooks, or digital devices

Method

Part A: Who is leading the motion?

1. Explain that the class will begin by playing a game to get them thinking about how we learn by copying or imitating others. They will play the Who is Leading the Motion? Game.
2. Organise students to stand in a circle. Appoint 2 or 3 students to be the detectives. They will then leave the room. Appoint another student to lead the movement.

   Demonstrate how the leader must use slow movements that everyone else can mirror. Explain that the aim of the game is to disguise who is leading the movement, and for it to appear as if all players are moving as one, just as would happen in a giant mirror.

   The leader slowly changes the movements so that the one pattern of movement is not repeated for too long.
3. Once the leader and flow of movements is established, invite the detectives back into the room. They must try to work out who is leading the motion. If they are correct, they will get to appoint the next 2 detectives, and the game will be repeated with a new leader and new detectives.

   If they are incorrect, they must leave the room again, but this time the teacher will select 2 additional detectives to help them. While they are gone, a new leader is appointed and the game begins again.
4. Use the game to open a discussion about how people learn from copying or imitation. Ask questions like:
   - Who and what do we copy in real life?
   - Who do we tend to copy when working out what to wear or what to play?
   - Where else in life do we learn by copying what people are doing?
   - What have you seen younger children learn through copying others?
   - What might happen if boys, girls and gender-diverse children think they must copy people of the same gender group as them? What might they miss out on?

Part B: Do fairytales create stereotypes that we need to challenge?

1. Ask students if any of them have heard or know the meaning of the word 'stereotype'? Work to create a definition supported by some examples.

A stereotype is when people assume that everyone in a certain group should be the same. A stereotype is unfair, because it doesn't show that people are different and have choices even though they may also have similarities. Often, stereotypes are a bit mean or judgemental because they lead to people having a set idea about what a person is, should or can be like, and this leads them to the wrong conclusions. A stereotype is like putting someone into a box that is too small for them.

Some examples include thinking that all people of a certain gender must be the same, or that all people of a certain skin colour must be the same. In everyday life, that can lead to things like thinking the boy always has to be the strong one, or the girl has to be the beautiful one. It leads people to thinking that some jobs or roles are gender-specific. Stereotypes are unfair and unhelpful, because they can work to shut down people's freedom to choose for themselves.

Stereotypes can work like the game we just played. So, they can mean that people think they have to copy only a certain leader – the leader who matches their gender. If this leader does not show free choices for people of their gender – if they make out that all people of their gender should only be a certain way – then this will not have a good effect on people who follow this leader. They will put a lot of effort into copying them, and end up thinking there are lots of things they can't do.

Explain that students are going to play the role of 'fairytale detectives'. They will be looking into the stories to see if they find any stereotypes. They will listen to you reading a simple fairytale that they may have heard or read when younger. As detectives, they are going to work out what kinds of things girls and boys and men and women get to do in fairytales.

2. Read a story with students. Lead a worked example with the class, showing how to use the fairytale detectives task sheet. Provide opportunity to work through at least one character who is a woman or girl and one who is a man or boy.
3. Arrange for students to work in pairs or small groups. Assign each group one of the characters from the story, and ask them to use the fairytale detectives task sheet to map out what they know about their allocated character. (To extend students, assign a group their own fairytale to read, and arrange for them to map what is happening for 3 to 5 characters.)
4. Invite each group to report their findings to the class. Following the presentations, invite students to make comparisons and generalisations about the investigative questions: 'Do fairytales tend to assign different kinds of roles according to the gender of the character? Do they contain stereotypes?'

   Invite students to compare these roles and stereotypes with their identity wheels, completed in the previous activity.
5. To deepen the discussion, ask students how these messages might influence how boys and girls think they should behave. Model an 'I wonder' statement to invite students to engage in higher-level thinking about messages that may come across in the text. For example, 'I wonder what messages these fairytales are giving boys and girls and gender-diverse children?' Provide time for them to think–pair–share or work further with their group before responding.

   Invite students to report back on their thinking.
6. Food for further thought: Ask students to consider how different the gender messages would be if all the characters in the fairytales swapped roles. For example, if the girl had the sword and the boy waited for her to rescue him, or if the baddies were the most beautiful and the goodies were described as ugly, or if they did not end with people getting married and living 'happily ever after'?
7. Ask students to think of characters they have seen in children's fiction or media who challenge gender stereotypes. (Refer back to some stories you have read with the class, and select some to introduce to the class.) Alternatively, students could invent a character who challenges gender stereotypes.

   Another option is to work with students to identify positive role models from sport, industry, family life, or children's fiction. For example, men who show interest in arts, who show tender emotions, or who are the main carer in the home; women who are successful in adventure sport or sport traditionally dominated by men; women in leadership roles in politics, science or industry; or non-binary or transgender people who model leadership and social contribution or success in their varied professions.
8. Ask students:

- How can you make sure that the gender restrictions you see in texts like fairytales, advertisements, on television or via other media do not become your 'leader'?
- How can you make sure that these texts do not lead you to think that there are invisible rules that say you can't have your own interests and choices just because of your gender?

Point out that we do have role models in the world who show us that people can make lots of free choices. We do not need to be stopped by gender stereotypes.

FAIRYTALE DETECTIVES

Task sheet
Name of the fairytale:
Name of the character:
Are they human or animal?
Are they women, men, gender diverse, gender neutral?
What does their character get to do?
Does their character get to speak a lot?
What are their possessions?
What are their looks? What do they wear?
Do they get to show they have power or strengths?

Part C: Learning language for gender

1. Remind students that we use the word 'sex' to talk about the different bodies that people are born with. Some of us are born with female body parts and others with male body parts. Some of us are born with a slightly different mix of body parts. We call this 'intersex'. So these are differences relating to our bodies.
2. We have a different word – 'gender' – that we use to help us understand who we are and how we interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being female or male. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these, or neither. Gender can be expressed in different ways – for example, through behaviour or physical appearance. When we say what our gender is, this is who we understand ourselves to be. Some people think their gender and their sex are just right as a match, and others don't.
3. The word gender also does more work for us. It helps us to talk about gender pressures. We learn gender by copying others. The word gender helps us to talk about the ideas we have about the pressures on us to behave in the same ways as people of our gender group and to be different from those in other gender groups. For example, boys feeling pressured to be like other boys or men, or girls feeling pressured to be like other girls or women, or gender-diverse people feeling pressured to be like members of one particular gender group. We learn about gender pressures from what we see in the world we are living in, including home, school, books, television and media.

Optional extension: In upcoming lessons, repeat this process with an analysis of one or more children's story that works to challenge gender norms. Compare this story or stories with the classic fairytales read earlier.

Review

Review the learning intentions, and check if students believe they can describe and compare the kinds of gender roles commonly seen in traditional fairytales. Ask students to comment on what they have learnt about the effects these kinds of gender stereotypes can have on people.

Topic 07

Activity 3: We can challenge gender pressures

Informed by the evidence base

Just as gender norms and stereotypes are often reinforced in children's literature, often the stories and messages children are exposed to in the media (for example, through television shows and advertisements) reinforce traditional gender norms and expectations.[51-53] Some research has suggested a link between television viewing and the learning of stereotypical gender perceptions among children.[53] In this context, children benefit from positive opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes in creative ways. This enables children to think critically 'outside the box', and recognise the potential limitations of traditional gender expectations and the opportunities that open up when we remove them.

Learning intentions

- Students will identify ways that peers can put gender pressure on each other.
- Students will identify ways to show respect for the ways people want to express their gender.
- Students will practise ways to challenge peers when they seek to limit choices because of a person's gender.

Equipment

- 'Challenging gender pressures' scenarios
- Pens, pencils and notebooks, or digital devices

Method

1. Introduce the idea that some people show respect for the choices and interests of others, and some people don't always do this. These people try to make others fit 'within the box', or stereotype, of what they think girls, boys or gender-diverse people should be like. For example, some people might say 'boys don't like ...' or 'girls can't do ...', or 'gender-diverse children should ...'.
2. Explain that sometimes people use the term 'gender pressure' for this, because it feels like people are putting pressure on you to be a certain way. It can be a form of peer pressure. Invite students to provide examples. Supplement their contribution with some of your own observations.
3. Explain that the next activity will challenge them to show what respect looks like in action in different sorts of situations. These are situations where some people put pressure on others to fit gender stereotypes.
4. Provide a worked example to assist the class. For example:

   Scenario 1: Some friends tease Kelly for being a tomboy because she always wants to play ball games.

   - What kind of gender pressure is happening here? Is it true that ball games are only for boys?
   - What could someone say to speak back to challenge this gender pressure?
   - Who could show us what that could look like or sound like?
5. Once you have worked through an example together, assign students to mixed groups and either allocate or have them choose a scenario. They should talk about the kind of gender pressure that is happening, and what someone could do to 'speak back' to this kind of peer pressure. They can then create a role-play that shows one of the ways this could be done. After their practice, they will show it to the class.
6. Allow time for groups to prepare their work, then arrange for them to present it to the class. Ask the audience to clap and show their appreciation for the contributions of their peers.
7. Following the presentations, invite students to make generalisations about ways to speak up about gender pressure in a respectful way.

   Students may suggest strategies such as 'disagreeing in an agreeable way', 'explaining that you have rights to make choices about what is right for you', 'challenging the truth of what they say', or 'giving examples that show what you mean'.

   Showing respect for someone can also include things like noticing them, listening to them, showing that you care about their human rights, not getting into someone else's personal space in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, asking if it is okay to use their things or to hug them, not interfering with other people's right to look, think, or act differently from you, and understanding when you need to learn from others.
8. Invite students to review their identity wheels (completed in Topic 7, Activity 1) and to consider whether they want to challenge any gender pressures by adding more items to their list of preferences or interests.

Review

Review the learning intentions, and invite students to reflect on how they might show respect for people at school, at home and in the community. Ask: 'What can we do to make sure that we show respect for whichever way our friends and fellow students like to show their gender identity or their individuality?'

Invite students to turn and talk to a partner about things they have done to show they know how to 'speak back' when people put unfair pressure on them to be a certain way, just because of their gender. Students can then turn back and share their thoughts with the class.

Coaching point:

What respect looks like. A focus on behaviours or on what people can do to show respect can be more empowering than a focus on qualities. 'I wait my turn' signals more clearly what is expected than 'I am patient'.

It is important to be able to name the behaviours that constitute disrespect, and those that are respectful. This specificity helps peers and teachers to address in an educative way comments like, 'I was only joking'. Such comments work to erase or excuse gender-based harassment and violence. Naming the behaviour can be an important first step in signalling that it is unacceptable, disrespectful, hurtful or harmful. Equally, it is important to be able to name the positive behaviour to provide endorsement for and encouragement of these behaviours.

Use a strengths-based approach to behaviour management, aiming to find at least 5 to 8 positives to acknowledge for any negative behaviour that must be named. (For example, 'It's good to see you ready and listening', 'I see you have already made a start' or 'It's great to see you have all lined up so quickly'.)

Coaching point:

Gender fair, gender aware. Some students may have very strong views about what it is appropriate for boys and girls to do. A 'gender-fair' or rights-based approach is useful. Encourage students to challenge the limiting nature of gender labels by focusing on the positives: identifying what boys and girls and gender-diverse children can do, rather than what they 'can't'. Provide books that include characters not limited by gender stereotypes and that provide positive role models for children of all genders. Be alert that researchers have found that the majority of central characters in children's fiction have been boys and men and that characters who are girls and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways. Gender non-conforming characters have typically been absent. This means that attention is needed when selecting texts that correct for this imbalance.

‘Challenging gender pressures’ scenarios

Scenario 1: Some friends tell Habeeba, ‘You won’t like that book. It’s a book for boys.’

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 2: Some classmates make fun of Jackson because he loves to dance and sing.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 3: Some friends tell Terri their hair is too short and if they want people to know they are a girl, they need a ponytail.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 4: Some people from a younger grade tell Mason that pink is only for girls, so he shouldn’t wear pink board shorts.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 5: Some classmates tell Iluka that she can’t play football with them because football is only for boys.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 6: Some friends tell Sujata that she can’t be an astronaut when she grows up because that is a job for men.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 7: Some friends call the boys ‘babies’ if they cry when they hurt themselves – but when girls cry, they offer to help.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Scenario 8: Some classmates tell Ishaan that he can’t be a kindergarten teacher when he grows up because that is really a job for women.

- What kind of gender pressure is happening here?
- What could someone say back to this?
- Show how someone could ‘speak back’ to challenge this gender pressure.

Topic 07

Activity 4: Rights and responsibilities

Informed by the evidence base

Research demonstrates that those with rights-affirming attitudes are less likely to engage in gender-based violence and that belief in the equality of men and women is protective against the uptake of violence-endorsing attitudes and practices.[54, 55] Therefore, it is important for children to learn about human rights, to learn how to respect human rights and to learn within a school environment that models respect for human rights. When students learn about human rights, they are better placed to defend their rights and those of others.[56, 57]

Learning intentions

- Students will identify the difference between 'rights' and 'responsibilities'.
- Students will identify some rights and responsibilities that apply to them.
- Students will identify some people in their lives who share responsibility for protecting their human rights.

Equipment

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child poster** https://www.unicef.org.au/stories/poster-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child for display or reference
- Access to or copies of school values or vision statement and class rules/norms
- Rectangular pieces of poster paper (brick-shaped)
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or digital devices
- 'It's my world' model

Method

Part A: Introducing rights and responsibilities

1. Invite students to turn and talk with a partner, before discussing with the class: 'What do we mean by "rights"? What are our rights?' After whole-class sharing, co-construct a definition. Record the class definition of 'rights'.

What are 'rights'?
Our rights are what every human being deserves, no matter who they are (regardless of gender, colour or race) or where they live, so that we can all live in a world that is fair for everyone.

Explain that over the years, people from many countries have met to think about how we can create a world that is fair and gives everyone human rights – a place where everyone is valued and treated with respect. This group is called the United Nations, and they have created a number of agreements that say that all people, including children, should have their rights protected. This should happen no matter who they are, what gender they are, where they come from, who they live with, what they look like, or whether or not they have a disability. They should all have the right to be free, to feel safe, to be protected from harm and to be able to learn and grow up to be the best person that they can be.

(For example, children should have the right to education, the right to health care, the right to clean air and water and healthy food, the right to safety and privacy, the right to be protected from harmful adults, the right to leisure and play, and the right to remain with their family unless their family is causing them harm.)

2. Invite students to also identify some of the rights that they have at school. Record these.

   Assist students to compare these suggestions with the rights identified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child poster.

3. Inform the class that when people talk about rights, they also talk about who shares the responsibility to protect people's rights. Ask, 'What do we mean by "responsibility"?' Invite students to turn and talk with a partner. After whole-class sharing, work together to come up with a definition.

What are responsibilities?

Responsibilities are duties. Often these duties are towards others, but they can also be to ourselves. For example, we may be responsible for getting ourselves dressed and putting food in our mouths. That is a responsibility for ourself. We may be responsible for making sure a baby does not swallow a toy that we are playing with. That is a responsibility we hold for someone else. Responsibilities are duties or expectations we are supposed to do, to make things work, and to show care and respect for others and for our environment.

Record the class definition of responsibility.

4. Invite students to list some of the responsibilities they have at school. Record these. (To contextualise their ideas, consider inviting students to make links with the school values and vision statement, and the class rules.)

   Ask:

   - Looking at this list of rights and responsibilities, what do you think might happen when people don't take on responsibility for helping to protect the rights of others?
   - How would this affect others?
   - What would happen if no one kept the rules or no one got their job done?

   Elicit examples, such as: it might be unfair or dangerous, other people could feel unsafe or unhappy, or other people would lose their rights.

   Explain that many of us are fortunate because we have a lot of people being responsible in ways that help us. Ask: 'Who are some of these people who help protect our rights? Who can we appreciate and thank for the way they show responsibility for protecting our rights?'

Part B: It's my world activity

1. Review the definitions of 'rights', 'responsibilities' and 'respect' used in previous activities, inviting students to remember the generalisations they made at the conclusion of those activities. This time, invite students to add to or modify their original ideas. Ask, 'If we think rights, responsibility and respect are 3 very important things that help to make the world a safe, fair and happy place, then what can we do to help this happen in our class, and in our school?' Invite student responses.
2. Show students the 'It's my world' model included in this activity. Point out how it shows that even though we are each just one small person, we are also part of a home, a class, a school and a community. At every level there are things we can do to make our world a better place.

   Display or sketch the concentric circles of the model (as shown) radiating from 'me' to 'home', 'class', 'school' and 'community'.

   Ask students to think about:

   - How can I take responsibility and show respect for rights in each of these places in my life?
   - What can I do?
3. Invite students to think–pair–share about actions that can be taken in each of the spheres to show respect for others. Invite each student to create their own model (or provide the handout as a base). Challenge them to find at least one action they can take at each level.
4. Invite students to share their models. Lead a focused discussion on gender and respect. Ask:

   - Is this respectful action suggested by (name of student), one that may be respectful to students of any gender?
   - Could it also be respectful to adults of any gender?
   - Are there any other actions we could to add to the list?
5. Provide time for students to add any extra ideas to their models, and then to put a star next to the action that they are most determined to take in the next few days.

Coaching point:
Diversity of beliefs. Some students may share that due to their religious, cultural or family beliefs, it is difficult for them to know how to support those of diverse gender identities and sexuality. This can feel like a challenging situation to address. One approach that may help is to reassure students that people do not have to share the religious beliefs or cultural backgrounds of others to show them respect. Respect is about the way we treat people. School and classroom expectations of behaviours and values promote kindness, respect and good treatment for all students, parents, carers and staff.

Review

Ask the class to discuss with the person next to them what they learnt in the activity. Ask students to comment on what helped them to realise that they show respect for others in many ways, and that when they do this, they are also showing responsibility for the ways their actions can affect the rights of others.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Teacher note: Teachers should read the content advice guidance in the Introduction well in advance, plan ahead with their school leadership team and colleagues, and revisit protocols for management of students who may show distress or engage in help-seeking. Inform students about upcoming content for Topic 8 in case they want to talk to a teacher, parent or carer in advance of or in response to the activities.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- What teaching and learning practices do you use to create a gender-inclusive learning environment? Consider your classroom routines, behaviour management, use of learning groups and learning experiences, text selection, and use of positive role modelling.
- How do policies and practices in the broader school environment influence the construction of a gender-inclusive learning environment?
- To what extent does your school's bullying prevention or inclusion and diversity policy specifically address harassment or discrimination based on sexuality, gender identity or intersex status?

Extension activities

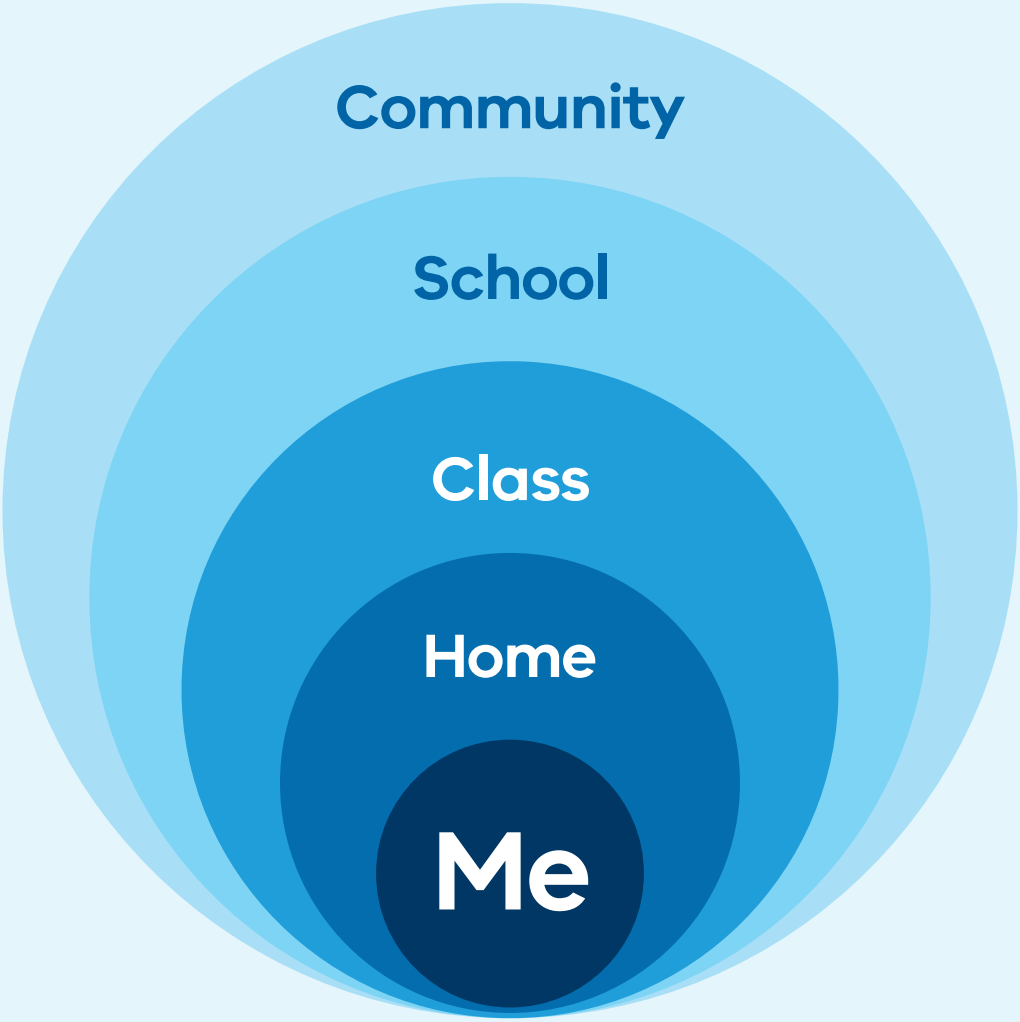
Invite students to create a story about a character who is a good role model for showing how someone of any gender can be strong *and* gentle, and adventurous *and* helpful.

Talking further

Talk with people at home about what they think advertisers do to try to sell their products to children. Ask if they think different messages are sent to children of different genders about what they should hope to buy or own.

‘It’s my world’

Model



Topic 08 Positive gender relations

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify different forms of gender-based violence, including physical, verbal and psychological violence
- examine the effects of gender-based violence on victim-survivors, witnesses and those who intentionally use violence
- describe and demonstrate what respectful, gender-inclusive behaviours look like in action
- assess situations involving forms of gender-based violence to consider possible responses (safely leave, intervene, refuse to participate, seek help)
- describe and practise help-seeking skills and strategies that can be used when encountering uncomfortable or unsafe situations involving peers or adults
- rehearse and refine strategies for seeking, giving and denying consent respectfully and describe situations where consent is required.

Content Advice

Some of the activities in this topic contain content that may be sensitive for some students. It is important to provide content advice in advance of lessons as well as at the commencement of a class. See the Introduction page 15 to this resource for further guidance on providing content advice.

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

Patterns of gender-based violence in society affect children and young people. Family violence includes a range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur in families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. Family violence is often witnessed by the children who live in the household.[58] Children are victims of family violence when they hear, witness or are exposed to the effects of family violence on a family member, as well as when the violence is directed towards them. In Australia, domestic, family and sexual violence is found across all cultures, ages and socio-economic groups, but the majority of those who experience these forms of violence are women.[59] Children who witness family violence are negatively affected. They are also more likely to be affected by violence when they are adults – either as victims of partner violence or as perpetrators of violence against children or partners. Some research shows that boys who witness their father use violence against their mother are up to 5 times more likely to use violence against their own partner when they grow up.[60, 61]

Research highlights that one of the most consistent predictors of the perpetration of violence against women at an individual level is a traditional view about gender roles and relationships.[55] A body of research has demonstrated that cultural understandings of 'masculinities' and 'femininities' operate as normative discourses (or 'scripts') that shape people's identities, expectations and behaviours, regardless of their gender or sexuality. These discourses and norms intersect with race, class, age and other lines of identity and difference to shape what people presume to be desirable and permissible in relation to their social interactions [62, 63].

Some boys and men can become defensive in response to initiatives addressing prevention of gender-based violence. They may feel that the focus on the violence perpetrated by some men is an attack on men in general, and hence an attack on their own personal identity or integrity. This can lead to the presumption that they are being individually blamed or accused or that they are being expected to redress a wrong they did not perpetrate. In response, there can be an urge to defend one's membership group, to challenge the veracity of the data, to disbelieve the scale or impact of the problem, or to attribute blame to the victims themselves.[64] A combination of relevant and inclusive scenarios and information can help to build recognition of the effects of violence on targets and on witnesses.

Studies show that school-based social and emotional learning, violence prevention and respectful relationships initiatives can make a real difference, producing lasting change in attitudes and behaviours in students [40-43]. In effective respectful relationships programs, children and young people learn about the ways power relations inform gender relationships. They learn how to translate a belief in respect for others into respectful communicative practices. This requires a focus on skills as well as attitudes. Studies show that effective programs employ participatory and interactive pedagogy. Participatory pedagogies stimulate the critical thinking necessary to interrogate social norms and the skills development needed to engage in a positive way with others.[65]

High rates of victimisation and associated trauma mean that in any class there will likely be students who have been affected by family violence and/or sexual violence. In any school, there will also be a proportion of staff affected. Some of those affected may find the focus on this material to be particularly sensitive. They may also be without established means of support, as many people do not disclose that they have suffered abuse or sexual violence in childhood or beyond.[66] Disclosures about bullying, family violence and sexual abuse can increase during or following such programs, with some disclosures made to educators, while other students turn to helplines [67]. Given this likelihood, it's important that clear protocols and pathways for teacher response are clearly established in advance, that wellbeing staff are made aware of the timing of program delivery, and that students are provided with information about trusted external help sources that they may access by phone or online.

Trauma-informed approaches to education recommend that teachers be informed about the strategies that may be useful to assist those affected to settle, connect and participate in class. Effective strategies include providing opportunities for student voice, choice and control; establishment of positive and caring relationships; understanding the effects of trauma; and use of proactive approaches to provide wellbeing support.[68] To signal recognition of the possible effects of trauma being triggered, and to promote awareness of participation options and further support, it is appropriate to provide content advice – both in advance, and at the start of lessons addressing gender-based violence. Content advice can include description of options for levels of participation, and information about how to access support within and beyond the school.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Advise students that in this topic they will focus on what it can be like if people are mean or hurtful to someone, including when this takes the form of violence and gender-based violence. This means discussing scenarios that focus on how other people must respect their body boundaries, and not hurt them, scare them or trick them into keeping secrets that are not safe. There will also be activities that focus on how to help others or to get help for yourself if people are treating you badly.

Reinforce the importance of respectful conversations. Revisit the class agreements as appropriate (see guidance in the learning activities in the Introduction).

Sample script for content advice for Topic 8:

Across the next few lessons we will be talking about what it can be like if people are mean or hurtful to someone. In some of the stories and scenarios we hear, there will be children who have been called mean names or hurt or left out. Sometimes this is because other children have done this to them. Sometimes a child has been hurt by an older child or an adult. We will learn more about how to help our friends if this has happened to them. We will also learn more about how to ask for help if this happens to us.

We will also be talking about good secrets and bad secrets. A bad secret is when someone has been hurting you, scaring you, or bothering you, and they make you promise not to tell anyone about this.

We want to keep everyone safe, and that is why we will do these lessons.

Sometimes, when we hear a story about someone being unsafe, or hurt, it might make us feel a bit wobbly inside. Before we start each lesson, I will let you know if there will be scenarios about children who have been hurt, left out or called mean names. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset or wobbly, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay.

Consider using a 'Talk to a teacher' slip for classes with sensitive content, which gives students the opportunity to anticipate their preferences before a class begins. If used, care should be taken to ensure that the slips are protected from misuse, loss, and unauthorised disclosure.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Coaching point:
Self-care when teaching about sensitive issues.
Teaching about sensitive issues can cause teachers to reflect on situations affecting them personally or people they are close to. If you want to seek help on your own behalf, a list of support services can be found in the 'Teacher professional preparedness and support' section of the Introduction page 14.

Topic 08

Activity 1: What is violence?

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to work with children from an early age to consider the difference between fair and friendly play and play that is violent or 'too rough'. This sets the scene for understanding that violence is never acceptable, and definitely not as a mode of resolving a relationship problem. [44, 69] Some gender norms tolerate higher levels of violence when perpetrated by boys or upon boys. Violence can be excused or endorsed through sayings like 'boys will be boys'. It is important to set the same non-violent standards for all genders. It is also important to establish the expectation that all children can learn the self-control needed to ensure that they do not resort to violence to get their own way or to deal with their frustration.

Learning intentions

- Students will give examples of verbal, physical and emotional violence.
- Students will identify emotions people may feel when affected by violence.
- Students will describe acts of friendship that can be used to help those affected by violence.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Whiteboard
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: Building a definition of violence

1. Inform students:

   We will be talking about violence, including when people say mean things to others or try to hurt them. We are doing this to understand what violent or unsafe behaviour is so we can recognise when it may have been used by ourselves or by others.

   If you find that the lessons make you feel upset or wobbly, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Invite students to sit in a circle. Review the class rules for circle time or whole discussion time. (For example, one person speaks at a time. Everyone else listens. There are no put-downs.) Invite students to work together to build a definition for the word 'violence'. Elicit and clarify students' understanding of violence in its various forms.

3. Prompt students to include examples of physical, verbal and emotional or psychological violence. Create a word map on the board on which to build a list of types of violence. Using this, show how they can be grouped into types including physical, verbal and psychological (or emotional).

   Useful definitions of violence

   - Physical: When a person slaps, pushes, kicks, throws objects, or uses objects to hurt a person; or when a person damages property or possessions (for example, by smashing, throwing, stealing or hiding)
   - Verbal: Saying, writing, posting or texting mean, hurtful or untrue things about a person to put them down
   - Psychological or emotional: deliberately excluding people, making rude or threatening facial expressions or gestures, stalking people, threatening or scaring people, or humiliating, shaming or embarrassing people

Part B: Who is affected by violence?

Coaching point:

Protecting privacy. In discussing the scenarios, students may make comparisons with their own experience. Ensure that they do not name the people involved when sharing from their own experience. Explain to them it is best not to use the classroom as a place to discuss worrying things that have happened at home or elsewhere. This is better done when everyone else in the class is not part of the conversation. It is better to tell that story to the teacher in a more private way. Use reminders at the start of the activity when you anticipate this might happen.

Protective interrupting is also a strategy that teachers can use, in an assertive and respectful way, to interrupt students who begin to disclose private or sensitive information about themselves or others. It is a teaching strategy designed to protect the person telling the story from disclosing in front of the class (redirecting students to a more supported context for disclosure instead), other people in the story from having their experiences discussed in a public setting, students from experiencing any distress at hearing the disclosure, and the fidelity of the lesson. If a student begins to disclose private information about themselves or others in the group space, respectfully interrupt the student by acknowledging their contribution and preventing further disclosure, for example, 'Thank you. It sounds as though you have something important to talk about. Let's chat about this after the lesson when we can talk properly.' Prioritise meeting with the student(s) in a more private, safe space within the school as soon as possible.

1. Ask students to identify the different people who can be involved in or affected by an act of violence. Review the language around those affected, including:
   - the person who has been violent towards someone else – this is the person who was intentionally hurtful or violent to another
   - the person who was the victim, survivor or the victim-survivor – the person who has the violence done to them
   - the bystanders or witnesses or observers – the people who see or hear the violence happening
   - the 'upstanders' or responders – the people who get involved in either trying to stop the violence, or helping the person affected by the violence
   - the allies – people who care about the situation and show support for those affected. For example, friends, family and teachers. These people may also feel upset that bad things have happened to someone, or that someone they care about has done something hurtful. They may need to help the person who has been hurt. They may also need to help the person who was violent to learn how not to use this kind of hurtful behaviour.

Coaching point:

Bystander or upstander? Introduce students to the notion that a bystander is someone who observes something. A bystander can be affected by violence directed towards others, as it may also cause them to feel distressed or anxious that they too might receive this treatment. A bystander may, however, decide to become an 'upstander'. An upstander is someone who takes positive action to assist people who are excluded, hurt or victimised. As students respond to scenarios, they have the opportunity to consider possible options that could be taken during or after the event as part of being a helpful upstander. They are also invited to consider how particular options might affect their own safety as well as that of others. Acknowledge that 'upstanding' can take courage. Knowing what to do is one thing, but actually carrying out the planned action is the real challenge.

2. Refer back to the 'emotions' statues that students made in Topic 1: Emotional literacy. Invite students to create statues (either in their seats or in a free space) that show what a person might feel if they saw or heard other people being violent.
3. Invite the class to look at collections of the statues and match the emotions with words – for example, afraid, angry, terrified, embarrassed, ashamed, scared, guilty, panicky, sad, hopeless or distressed. Sum up by explaining that even if we are not the target, it is distressing for us to see or hear or learn that acts of violence have happened to someone. This is especially the case if we know and care about the people involved.
4. Invite the class to create a second statue showing how someone might feel soon after they have been a target (just after the person who was violent has left the scene).
5. Invite the class to look at a collection of the statues and match the emotions with words – for example, afraid, angry, terrified, embarrassed, ashamed, scared, guilty, panicky, sad, hopeless or distressed. Sum up by explaining that if we are the target, we might have similar emotions to what a witness might feel, except this time our emotions might be even more intense, strong or long-lasting.

   Remind students that we can feel our emotions in our bodies. Ask them to name the ways our bodies might react – for example,

heart racing, sweating, feeling sick, teary, shaky, wanting to go to the toilet, or feeling faint.

6. To lift the mood, invite students to create a third set of statues that show what it feels like when someone has cheered you up, shown friendship to you, invited you to play, or helped you just after someone was mean.
7. Invite the class to look at a collection of the statues and match the emotions with words – for example, happy, relieved, loved, safe, appreciated, cared for, strong, reassured, proud, respected. Finish up by explaining that when someone shows support for us after we have had a bad experience, we can feel very different emotions. We can have a very powerful effect on others when we show friendship, support and care for them.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

8. Inform students:

   'In another activity we will do soon, we will focus on gender-based violence. We will work out what this type of violence looks like, feels like and sounds like, and what we may think about if it happens to us.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.
9. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe, confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
10. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Review the learning intentions, and ask if students believe that they were able to:

- give examples of different kinds of violence, including physical, verbal, and emotional or psychological violence
- describe the emotional effects that violence can have on people who witness or experience it
- identify the contribution that acts of friendship can make to those who have been affected by violence.

Invite students to think about and explain how acts of friendship can help those who have been affected by violence. Ask students what these acts of kindness might look like.

Coaching point:
Label the behaviour, not the person. When discussing violence, ensure that you model approaches to naming the behaviour, rather than labelling the person. This emphasises that the behaviour is a choice, and not an integral part of someone's identity. For example, talk about the person who bullied someone, rather than 'the bully'. Talk about the person who used violence against another, rather than 'the perpetrator'. Ensure that you identify that this behaviour is directed towards another person, as interpersonal violence is violence intentionally directed towards another. Careful attention to your phrasing will help to draw attention both to the choice someone made to use violence, and the impact of the violence on others. It is important that children learn that people make a choice to use violence, and that if they do choose to be violent towards others, it has negative effects on the person experiencing violence, on the people surrounding, and on the person who uses the violence.

Coaching point:
Terminology. Some people prefer to use the word 'target' rather than 'victim' to imply that the person who was violent to them made a choice and that their act was deliberate. Some prefer to use the word 'survivor' or 'victim-survivor' rather than the word 'victim', as they find this word more suggestive of strength and recovery. Others prefer the word 'victim' as suggesting the innocence of the targeted party.

It is important to avoid use of labels like 'bully' or 'perpetrator', as that suggests an identity, and to comment instead on the behaviour of the person doing the wrong thing.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Topic 08

Activity 2: What is gender-based violence?

Informed by the evidence base

Studies show that well-designed and implemented school-based classroom interventions addressing violence prevention and respectful relationships can produce change in attitudes and behaviours.[70-72] In effective programs, children and young people learn about how to translate a belief in respect for others into respectful communicative practices. This requires a focus on skills as well as attitudes. Studies show that effective programs employ collaborative learning activities and evoke the critical thinking necessary to interrogate social norms and to develop the social skills needed in daily life.[65] Providing specific and comprehensive classroom programs to all students is a key part of a whole-of-school approach to preventing gender-based violence.[44]

Learning intentions

- Students will learn the meaning of the term gender-based violence.
- Students will give examples of different types of gender-based violence.
- Students will describe how gender-based violence may affect those who experience the violence, as well as those who have chosen to use violence.

Equipment

- A3 copy of the 'X-chart' for each group
- 'Gender-based violence' scenario cards
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or digital devices
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Coaching point:
Protective interrupting. Protective interrupting is also a strategy that teachers can use, in an assertive and respectful way, to interrupt students who begin to disclose private or sensitive information about themselves or others. It is a teaching strategy designed to protect the person telling the story from disclosing in front of the class (redirecting students to a more supported context for disclosure instead), other people in the story from having their experiences discussed in a public setting, students from experiencing any distress at hearing the disclosure, and the fidelity of the lesson. If a student begins to disclose private information about themselves or others in the group space, respectfully interrupt the student by acknowledging their contribution and preventing further disclosure, for example, 'Thank you. It sounds as though you have something important to talk about. Let's chat about this after the lesson when we can talk properly.' Prioritise meeting with the student(s) in a more private, safe space within the school as soon as possible.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: Building a definition of gender-based violence

1. Inform students:

   In this lesson we will be learning about types of gender-based violence. This will help us to better understand what gender-based violence or unsafe or unfair behaviour actually is so that we can realise how it may have been used by ourselves or by others.

   If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like these and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Refer back to the definition of violence created in the former activity. Remind students that they have also worked to learn the word gender and that they did some detective work on spotting where they can see gender stereotypes in fairy tales and children's media (see Topic 7).

3. Ask students to use this prior work with the words violence and gender to help them to guess what the term gender-based violence might describe. Elicit some suggestions. If

needed, explain that gender-based violence is a form of violence that targets people because of their gender. Like other kinds of violence, gender-based violence can be physical, verbal or psychological. It is the kind of violence that is committed because someone thinks they can be mean to others just because the other person is not showing exactly the same interests or preferences as them. It includes things like teasing girls by saying they are too much like a boy or teasing boys by saying they are too much like a girl, or teasing someone about being gender-diverse.

A definition of gender-based violence: Gender-based violence is a type of violence. It includes forms of violence that target people just because of their gender. It includes physical, verbal and emotional violence. It includes when people are violent or mean to someone just because they are a boy, girl, man, woman, intersex, non-binary or transgender person. It can sound like people saying that boys, girls or gender-diverse people can, can't or must do something JUST BECAUSE of their gender.

4. Explain that the class is now going to listen to a scenario about a student who has experienced gender-based violence in the form of people saying mean things to them. They will think about how this experience might have made the person feel, and about how the people watching might have felt or how they might have decided to help. Read through the following scenario with students.

Part B: Happy and sad moments at the sport and recreation day

1. Read the following story to students. Point out that in this story, 3 people had their own special interests and skills. Most children were delighted to learn this about their classmates. But there were some mean comments, and all of them were forms of gender-based violence. What made this gender-based violence?

It was 'sport and recreation day' at school, and students were asked to come in the clothes they wear to play favourite sports or active games. Many students wore sport uniforms including basketball, football and netball uniforms. Some wore ballet costumes, or karate uniforms, and others wore their bike helmets. It was supposed to be a happy day, and it was for most students. But 3 students were not happy. This is because other classmates teased them in a gender-based way.

This happened to Raj, Audrey and Frankie. Audrey had brought her skateboard, and wore her helmet, knee pads and elbow pads. She showed some kids a few of the tricks she had learnt and everyone was impressed. But later, some girls teased her for being too much like a boy because she loved skateboarding.

Raj wore a traditional Indian dance costume from the Punjab area of India where his parents were born. He was skilled in doing the bhangra dance, with lots of high jumps and kicks. He got lots of cheers when he demonstrated, but some boys made rude comments about his costume. They told him they could not tell if he was a boy or a girl when he was dressed like that.

Frankie wore a gymnastics costume and showed some of the tumbles and somersaults they could do. People were amazed and lots of them said they wished they could do such great cartwheels and tumbles. But later one student said mean things to Frankie about having sparkles on their costume. They said that Frankie should switch to football if they wanted to be a boy so much, because people would still think they were a girl if they wore sparkles and did gymnastics.

2. Use key questions to scaffold students' analysis of what was happening in this scenario. For example:
   - Who was being picked on, or who was the target?
   - What were the mean things that were done or said?
   - Who were the observers or witnesses?
   - What was unfair here?
   - What made this gender-based violence – rather than just violence?
3. Direct students' attention towards the possibility of help-seeking. Ask students to imagine how seeking help might lead to a happier and more respectful experience.
4. Explain to students that they will use an 'X-chart' to map out what this situation might have been like for one of the 3 people who were the target of the gender-based violence (Raj, Audrey or Frankie). Draw the X-chart on the board (see handout), and complete it as a worked example with the class, with a chart for each of the characters, asking:
   - How might the person feel (emotions)?
   - How might this show or feel in their body (body language and body sensations)?
   - What might the person sound like (what they might say or their tone of voice)?
   - What might they be thinking (their self-talk or the wishes or fears that they are not saying out aloud)?

5. Provide time for pairs or small groups of students to follow this model by completing the X-chart for one of the characters in their allocated gender-based violence scenario. (Assign different scenarios to different groups to enrich the report-back phase of the activity.) Once they have completed their X-chart, invite them to imagine how seeking help might lead to a happier and more respectful conclusion to this story. Ask, 'What might help to heal or improve this situation for the person affected?'

Coaching point:
Scenario selection: When selecting scenarios to use, you may wish to make modifications to align with student needs and the local context.

6. Invite groups to present their X-chart ideas for healing or improving the situation to the class.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

7. Inform students:

   'In our next activity, we will focus on consent in action. We will talk about personal space, body boundaries and why consent matters.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

8. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

9. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Review the learning intentions with students. Ask if they can give or recall some examples of different kinds of gender-based violence.

Coaching point:
Playtime check-ups. Make regular opportunities to check back in with students about how they are managing to 'play fair' and 'play gender fair' during break times. Reflect on how to ensure gender-fair play. Avoid using a 'boys will be boys' script, as this will signal that this is an acceptable performance of masculinity. Additionally, help students to consider alternative options if you observe that girls, members of minority groups or students with disability acquiesce when dominant students take over a playspace. To simply accept these norms may erroneously signal to students that boys or certain groups are entitled to more than their share of resources and should not be expected to exert the same control over their bodies as others.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

'X-chart'

What does it LOOK like?
(body language or sensations)
e.g. head down, frowning, shaky

What are the THOUGHTS?
(self-talk, fears or hopes)
E.g. Do they hate me? Is there something wrong with me?
I wish they would stop.
I wish someone would help.

What does it SOUND like?
(words or tone of voice)
E.g. crying, yelling, silence, whispering

What does it FEEL like?
(emotions or feelings)
E.g. sacred, lonely, confused

Gender-based violence scenarios

Scenario 1

Some Year 1 students were playing a game in the sandpit that included building sandcastles then destroying them with toy cars. Some Year 1 girls started building a sand sculpture. The boys told them to leave because this was their playspace and it was not for girls. When the girls said no, the boys came over and jumped on their sculptures and chased the girls away.

Scenario 2

Some boys were playing football at lunch time. Two girls joined in. They both kicked some goals quite quickly. One boy got annoyed that the girls were getting lots of kicks, and he was getting hardly any. The boy grabbed a few of his friends and told them not to kick to the girls any more. When the girls complained, he told them to go play with the other girls. It was his football and he didn't want any 'girl germs' on it.

Scenario 3

Justin and Matteo were teasing Jude because he was drawing a picture of flowers and birds with his new sparkly pens. They called Jude a girl, and told him he would not get invited to Justin's birthday party because it was only for boys.

Scenario 4

It was Zola's first day at school. She and a new friend went to play on the adventure playground. Some older boys ran up to them yelling, 'This is our fort! Girls can't play here!' Then they grabbed the girls and pushed them out.

Scenario 5

Nora told Jannali that she could not sit with her anymore because she did not wear a dress to school, and never wore anything pretty in her hair. Nora said her group was for proper girls who know how to look pretty.

Scenario 6

Lillie loves playing basketball and is more skilled than many other students. Some girls in Lillie's class are being mean to her, claiming she can't really be a girl if she is better than the boys.

Scenario 7

When students got a choice during sport to do soccer or gymnastics, Campbell chose gymnastics straight away. He was the only boy and some of the girls said, 'You can't do gymnastics, it's only for us girls.'

Scenario 8

Tao had been known by her classmates as a girl since she was in Year 2. Everyone in the class helped to celebrate when she affirmed her gender. They understood that not everyone feels their gender is the best match with some of their body parts. However, one day, some older students accused Tao of just pretending to be a girl and tried to block her from going into the girls' toilets.

Topic 08

Activity 3: Understanding consent in action

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to teach children that other people do not have the right to hurt or to touch their bodies inappropriately. The terms 'okay' and 'not okay' can be used to refer to rules and so are useful in teaching about rights to be safe. Later in life, children will be able to understand that sexual touch between consenting parties over the age of consent is part of healthy human expression [73].

Increasing children's understanding that they have rights over their bodies, and that there are others who have a responsibility to help them protect these rights, can enable children to seek help. Children taught explicit child safety programs, including how to identify 'okay' and 'not-okay' touch demonstrate an increased ability to identify potentially abusive situations and differentiate between 'okay' and 'not-okay' touch [73, 74]. This teaching helps them to recognise and name unsafe and confusing touch and increase their capacity to ask for it to stop, to use strategies to protect themselves and to seek assistance from trusted adults in stopping it.

The need for such programs Is evident: prevalence data reveals that over 1 in 10 Australians aged 18 years and over (13%) have experienced abuse before the age of 15. This includes 7.7% who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15, and 8.5% who experienced physical abuse.

In the first incident of sexual abuse experienced by women before the age of 15, 12% were aged 0 to 4 years, 48% were aged 5 to 9 years, and 40% were aged 10 to 14 years. In the first incident of sexual abuse experienced by men before the age of 15, 6.8% were aged 0 to 4 years, 45% were aged 5 to 9 years, and 48% were aged 10 to 14 years.[75]

Of the men who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 years, 98% reported experiencing the abuse by someone known to them. The most common perpetrator type was a non-familial known person (that is, a known person who isn't a close family member, other relative or in-law): 65% of sexually abused men had been abuse by this perpetrator type.

Of the women who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 years, 91% experienced abuse by someone known to them. Forty-seven per cent experienced abuse by a non-familial known person, 28.4% experienced the abuse by a relative or in-law, and 17.4% experienced the abuse by a parent.[76]

Research shows significant knowledge gains and improved self-protective behaviours as a result of sexual abuse prevention education.[77-80] A meta-analysis of 24 child sexual abuse prevention programs showed that these programs increased children's knowledge about abuse prevention and improved their skills in protective behaviours.[81] This study found no evidence that the programs increased children's anxiety or fear.

Learning intentions

- Students will identify what the word 'consent' means.
- Students will practise ways to ask for consent.
- Students will practise ways to refuse or withdraw consent.
- Students will practise ways to respectfully accept when people refuse consent.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Consent detectives' scenarios
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   In this lesson, we will be learning about personal space and body boundaries and what it can be like if other people do hurtful or bad things to our bodies. We are learning about these things so that we can better understand what is okay and what is not okay, how to stay safe by telling someone to stop, by getting to somewhere that is safer, by seeking help to stay safe, or by telling someone

about what has happened. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Invite students to share their ideas about what we might mean by 'personal space'. For example, someone might say, 'You are too close inside my personal space.' What do they mean when they say that? Work together to create or demonstrate some examples of when a person might find someone to be too close for comfort.

A definition of personal space: Personal space is the amount of clear space we like to have between us and someone else. When people move into our personal space, we might feel uncomfortable or scared. We can have a different personal space for different people. For example, we might let our baby sibling crawl all over us but not want our classmate to do this. We might want a stranger to be much further away from our body than someone we know well. Our personal space can also be different according to our mood or what we are doing. Some people need more space around them when they are angry or afraid – or even when they are concentrating hard or playing a game outside.

One way to show respect is to accept when we need to give someone more personal space, and not crowd them.

3. We also have body boundaries. Our body boundaries are a kind of personal space about who can touch us and who can touch us where. The parts of our bodies under our bathers or underwear are the more private parts of our bodies, and so we have strict rules and feelings about people touching these parts of our body. We can say no if people try to cross our body boundaries.

4. One way to show respect is not to cross someone's body boundaries.

5. Invite students to offer their ideas about what we mean by consent. For example, someone might say, 'Did your parent consent for you to come on the school excursion?' or 'I didn't give you consent to borrow my pens, so please give them back.' Work with the class to build a definition of the word 'consent', supported by some examples. Record the class definition of consent.

Explaining consent: When someone asks for consent, this means they ask for permission. This could sound like, 'Please can I borrow your pencils?' or 'Is it okay to hug you?'

When someone says no, this means they don't give permission, or don't give consent. This could sound like when someone says, 'No, you can't borrow my pencils' or 'No, you can't hug me'.

When someone says yes, this means they do give permission or they do give consent. This could sound like when someone says, 'Yes – you can borrow my pencils' or 'Yes, you can hug me'.

Consent is when someone says yes just because they want to. They are not made to say yes because they are scared, or because they think they should. They don't say yes because they want a reward like getting present, a sticker or some lollies. They say yes, just because they want to.

When 2 people consent to do something, that means they both agree. They both say yes, just because they want to. This could sound like when one person says, 'Do you want to play ball with me?' And the other person says 'yes'.

People can also change their mind after they have said yes or given consent. This could sound like, 'I don't want to play ball anymore' or ' I don't want you to keep using my pens'.

6. Ask students to keep those things in mind as they work in small groups on the following scenarios. Reconnect students with the work they have already done to develop their understanding of how we show respect (Topic 2) and what we mean when we talk about rights and responsibilities (Topic 7, Activity 4).

7. Explain that students will use their understandings of respect and put this together with their understanding of personal space, body boundaries and consent. They will be 'consent detectives'. They will listen to a short scenario and see if they can work out if someone has asked for consent, given consent, refused consent or withdrawn consent.

8. Read and discuss each 'consent detective' scenario, ensuring the key teaching points about consent are established. Along the way, invite volunteers to role-play what the consent conversation might look like and sound like for that scenario. As you proceed, maximise participation in the role-plays by inviting students to turn and make a pair, so each pair can role-play the short consent conversation where they are sitting. Invite a few demonstrations along the way, so you can collectively establish positive and respectful ways to ask for consent, give consent, refuse consent, withdraw consent, and apologise if you have wronged someone in relation to consent.

9. Acknowledge the work students have done to demonstrate their understanding of how to ask for, give or refuse consent. Remind them that they have also shown a lot of examples of what respect might look like or sound like when people are talking about consent.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

10. Inform students:

    'In our next lesson, we will focus on using the No, Go, Tell model in response to gender-based violence.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

11. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

12. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Coaching point:
Why include scenarios about exposure to pornography? Most young people will either accidentally or intentionally encounter online pornography at some time during childhood or early adolescence [82]. A large-scale national survey in Australia found that 44% of children aged 9 to 16 had encountered sexually explicit material in the past month.[83] A United Kingdom study with 11 to 16-year-olds found that (94%) had encountered pornography before the age of 14 [84]. Pornography consumption can influence people's sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, as well as their perceptions of the opposite sex [85, 86]. Research shows a significant relationship between high levels of pornography consumption and attitudes supporting violence against women.[86-88]

Review

Ask the class to summarise what they have done to demonstrate they know how to ask for consent, refuse consent and give consent, and how to show respect when someone refuses consent.

Coaching point:
Complexities regarding choice and consent. Students may need help to clarify the differences between consent, where a choice can be made, and rules and responsibilities, where people have to do things they don't always feel like doing, like tidying up when their parent or teachers asks them to, or waiting for the green light before crossing the road. They may also need help to identify that there are times when certain people do have to touch our bodies, even though we may not wish this to happen – for example, when we need medical or dental care to keep us healthy or safe.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Consent detectives scenarios

Scenario 1: 'Yes' once is not 'yes' for every other time.

Akuna likes to borrow her brother Nullah's bike, and she always looks after it. When Akuna asks for consent to borrow Nullah's bike, he sometimes says yes, and sometimes says no, depending on whether he wants to use it. But when their neighbour Will asks Nullah if he can borrow the bike, Nullah always says no. He says no because he doesn't like the way Will treats his things.

- Does Akuna ask for consent?
- Does Nullah give consent to Akuna?
- Does Will ask for consent?
- Does Nullah give consent to Will?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: Just because you consent to something once, it does not mean you have to consent to something every time. Just because you say yes to one person, it does not mean you have to say yes to someone else.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Ask for some volunteers to role-play this scenario, showing how Akuna asks for consent and Nullah says yes to her, but not to Will. Ask them to also show what might respectfully be said and done by Will when Nullah says no.

Discuss: What feelings might we have when someone says no to us? What strengths might we use to help us deal with these feelings?

Scenario 2: A 'yes' can be changed into a 'no'.

Oliver lost his rubber. He asks to use Lan's rubber, and Lan agrees. But Lan finds their work is slowed down because Oliver always makes them wait when they want it back. This annoys Lan, so they ask Oliver to give the rubber back and tell him he can't use the rubber anymore.

- Did Oliver ask for consent to borrow Lan's rubber?
- Did Lan give consent?
- What changed and why?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: People have the right to change their mind and withdraw their consent.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Invite pairs to role-play this scenario, showing how consent is clearly asked for, given, then withdrawn, and how Lan's 'no' can be accepted respectfully by Oliver.

Discuss: When might it be more challenging to say no to someone, or to change your mind after you said yes? What strengths might we need to say no, or to refuse or withdraw consent when we need to?

Scenario 3: Consent, body signs and personal space

Jamil does not like it when people come too close into his personal space. He also prefers for people to ask before they hold hands with him when they line up at school. Jamil pulls his hand away when his friend Tung tries to hold it.

- Did Tung ask for consent to hold hands?
- Did Jamil refuse consent to hold hands?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: People don't always use words or their voice to show whether they give consent. Sometimes people send body signals that mean 'no', or mean that they don't give consent. They might shake their head, or pull away when you touch them. It is important to ask people for consent about the ways you touch their body. They may want more personal space or have different body boundaries from what you expect. It is good to ask, and it is okay to tell people about what the right personal space is for you.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Invite pairs to role-play a scenario where someone explains that they don't want to hold hands, but they do want to be friends.

Discuss: What are some of the ways we can show respect for people's personal space and check in if they send body signals that may mean 'no'?

Consent detectives scenarios

Scenario 4: Consent is for before, not after.

Ava borrows her older sister Orla's bracelet to wear to a birthday party. When Orla discovers that Ava took the bracelet without consent, she tells Ava that she has done the wrong thing, and she should always ask first. Ava says she was going to tell her afterwards, and even make a thank-you card. Orla explains that this is not the same. It's important to ask for consent before, not after, taking something.

- Did Ava ask for consent to borrow the bracelet?
- Did Orla give consent?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: It is important to ask for consent before rather than after an activity. It is important to apologise if you have done the wrong thing.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Invite pairs to demonstrate how Orla tells Ava about the importance of asking for consent. Show how Ava can respectfully say sorry.

Discuss: What strengths might we need to use to own up and say sorry when we have done the wrong thing?

Scenario 5: It is not consent if you were tricked into saying 'yes'.

Henry, Marika and Sujata are playing with a football when some older students ask to take the ball for a game they want to play. It's Marika's football and she says okay – but just for a short time. They promise Marika that she and her friends can join in the game once it gets started. However, they don't let them join in and when Marika asks for her football back, the older students laugh at them, refuse to return it and keep on playing.

- Did the older boys ask for consent to take the ball?
- Did Marika give consent?
- What changed for Henry, Marika and Sujata?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: It is not free or true consent if someone tricked you into saying yes, or lied to you about what they were asking consent for. That is not really asking for consent. It is lying or tricking someone. Truthful ways of asking for consent in this situation would be if the older boys said 'Can we have your football so we can play with it and you can watch us?'

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Demonstrate what the older boys might respectfully do and say to apologise for doing the wrong thing.

Discuss: Is it consent if someone bigger and stronger makes you do something you don't want to do, or tricks you into it by lying to you?

Scenario 6: It's not consent if other people try to force you to say yes.

Dan and Lila are annoyed because people keep teasing them about being friends. They walk to school together and they are neighbours and friends. Dan's friends say they should be boyfriend and girlfriend. They try to make Dan hold hands with Lila and tell him to kiss her.

On the way home, Lila asks Dan if he wants them to kiss. He says no, he just wants to be friends. She agrees and tells him she is glad because she thinks they are too young to be boyfriend and girlfriend.

- Did Lila ask Dan's consent?
- Did Dan give consent?
- Can their friends give consent for them?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: It is not consent if other people are trying to make you do something that you don't want to do. Also, we can be good friends with someone, but say no or not give consent for them to touch our body or kiss us. Friends should still ask for consent.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Role-play what Lila or Dan could say to the friends who are teasing them.

Discuss: Is it fair to other people to try to make them be boyfriend and girlfriend? Will students of all genders feel comfortable to be friends with each other if people do this to them?

Consent detectives scenarios

Scenario 7: Just because they are a grown-up doesn't mean you have to say yes.

Meg has an uncle who always asks for hugs by saying 'Come and give me a big cuddle.'. Then he picks her up and squeezes her for a long time. He doesn't wait for her to say yes or no. Meg does not like his hugs and she doesn't want the stickers or lollies he offers her afterwards. Sometimes she has to say loudly, 'You're hurting me' before he will let her go.

- Does Meg's uncle ask for consent?
- Does Meg give consent?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: It is not consent if someone tries to bribe you or promises you nice things like stickers or lollies or games, just so they can get you to say yes when you don't really want to. Children can say 'no' when they don't want to be touched or hugged. They can also say no to grown-ups. They can say no more than once, even if the other person keeps putting pressure on them to say yes or tries to scare them into saying yes. If a grown-up or someone older than you wants you to do something that is not okay, it is time to tell someone so you can get some help.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Role-play what Meg could say to let her uncle know that she doesn't want to hug. Or, role-play what she could say to her parent or carer, to ask them to help explain this to her uncle.

Discuss: Do you have to say yes just because it is a grown-up who wants to hug you? Are you allowed to have personal space and body boundaries between you and grown-ups and between you and other children?

Scenario 8: If someone tells you to keep a secret, this could be a danger sign.

Someone Bella met when she was online asks for a selfie of Bella just wearing bathers. Bella did not send one, but did keep chatting with this person. They keep asking her to take a selfie and send it. They tell her to keep this a secret and not to tell her parents as they might get angry with her and ban her from being online. Bella felt a bit nervous and funny in her tummy about this, and she was worried about getting into trouble.

- Did the person online ask Bella to consent or agree to send a photo?
- Did Bella say yes, or give her consent?

T**eacher note – key consent pointer:** You should not consent to sending a photo of yourself to someone you meet online. It is not safe to send photos to people you meet online. Your warning signs might be the feeling that something is not quite right. These warning signs are there to tell you that you might be with an unsafe person. If someone tries to pressure you or trick you into doing something, and also to keep it a secret, they are not a safe person. The person on the other end may be lying about who they are. If this happens, children should go offline and tell a parent or carer or another adult they trust that someone is trying to pressure or trick them into doing something they don't think is okay.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Role-play what Bella could say to tell a parent or carer, or another adult she trusts, that someone wants her to send photos of herself and that they told her to keep it a secret.

Discuss: Do you have to say yes just because someone keeps asking you, or tries to scare you into something, or tells you to keep everything secret?

Consent detectives scenarios

Scenario 9: People shouldn't force you to watch things that are not for children.

Parker had some friends over to his house after school. He told them they should watch something he found online. When he showed it to them, his friends Pete and Omari could tell that this was not something that was okay for children to watch. It showed adults without any clothes on doing things to each other. They also knew it was not okay for someone to make other people look at adult-only material. Pete and Omari said Parker should turn it off, but he kept trying to show them more. He didn't stop until he heard his dad was coming down the hallway.

- Is it okay for someone to force other people to watch this kind of thing?
- Did Pete and Omari clearly say that they did not consent?
- Did Parker respect their choice?

Teacher note – key consent pointer: You should not consent to watching adult-only material, which in this example can also be called pornography. Children are not old enough to watch adult-only material and nobody is allowed to force them. If this happens, your warning signs might be the feeling that something is not quite right. These warning signs are there to tell you that you or someone else might be doing something that isn't right. If someone tries to pressure you, they are not being a safe person. One way to tell that something may be wrong is when someone doesn't want their parent to see them doing it. If this happens, children can tell a parent or carer, or another adult they trust, that someone is trying to pressure or trick them into doing something they don't think is okay.

Invite a role-play response and demonstration: Role-play what Pete and Omari could say and do when Parker does not respect their wishes not to watch ('go') or how they share what happened with their parent or carer ('tell').

Discuss: Do you have to say yes just because someone keeps pressuring you, or tries to make you do something, or tells you to keep everything secret?

Topic 08

Activity 4: Using the No, Go, Tell model in response to gender-based violence

Informed by the evidence base

Children in the early years of school are often seen as being too young to understand or to have experienced gender discrimination or gender violence. However, young children can and do experience gender discrimination and violence. Hence, they need the language and strategies to challenge these experiences and to protect themselves. Self-care and help-seeking strategies (for example, the No, Go, Tell strategy used in this activity) empower children to assert their rights over their own bodies, and to gain the support they need if someone is breaching their rights. While people are often worried that knowledge of things 'wrong' in the world may tarnish children's innocence, it is essential that they are aware that their body belongs to them and that they have the right to say 'no' and to seek help.[89]

Learning intentions

- Students will learn the 3 key steps of the No, Go, Tell model.
- Students will use the No, Go, Tell model to advise actions a person could take if affected by gender-based violence.

Equipment

- 'Help-seeker scenario' cards
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Coaching point:
Reconnecting with prior learning. In this activity, students consider actions they can take if they encounter a situation that makes them feel unsafe. The activities in the Topic 1: Emotional Literacy, Topic 4: Problem-solving and Topic 6: Help-seeking provide an important foundation for these activities. Consider revisiting some of these activities prior to this lesson.

Method

1. Inform students:

   In this lesson we will be looking at scenarios where people have been affected by different types of gender-based violence and what they can do to get help. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Explain to students that they are going to think about what people can do if they are affected by gender-based violence. For example, if another student is being violent, or scary, or making someone feel unsafe. Remind students of the work they have already done to think about what it can feel like to be around violence. These early warning signs (EWS), emotions and uncomfortable feelings in the body are usually a clue that something is wrong, and there is a need to seek help.

3. Introduce the No, Go, Tell model, displaying the key steps on a poster or on the board. If a person is in a situation where they feel unsafe, or affected by violence, they can:

   - Say *no* (for example, ask the person or people making them feel unsafe to stop)
   - *Go* if they can (for example, walk away or get offline)
   - *Tell* a trusted person (for example, let someone know what happened or ask for help)

4. Explain:

   Now our class will model when they are affected by a problem related to gender-based violence. We will use the different parts of the No, Go, Tell model to help give us some ideas about what actions could be taken. After we hear each short scenario, we will do some thinking and make suggestions to help the person with the problem.

Scenario: Ahmed has always loved playing on the adventure playground, especially whizzing down the slide. But he hasn't liked going there since a new boy, Tristan, started at school. Now, sometimes when Ahmed climbs up the ladder or swings across the monkey bars, Tristan jumps up and tries to grab his shorts and pull them down. Even though Ahmed always tells him to stop it, Tristan keeps doing it.

Use the No, Go, Tell model to discuss:

- Who feels uncomfortable or unsafe in this situation?
- How could Ahmed use the 'no' part of the No, Go, Tell model? What could he say to Tristan? Are there any other ways he could say that?
- If Ahmed needs to go to keep himself safe, where could he go? In this school, where can someone go at playtime if they need to be safe or get help?
- Who could Ahmed tell or ask for help? Are there any other ideas about who children can go to for help at this school?
- What could any children who see this happening to Ahmed do to help?
- What do you think Tristan needs to learn? What do you think might help him learn how to respect people's rights to their personal space and their body boundaries?

5. Collect students' answers. Build onto them with additional information if needed – like where to go for help in the school, or how to speak back if being harassed. Explain how these actions are designed to help deal with a problem before it gets worse. Revisit key learning around the rights people have to keep parts of their body private (see for example, Activity 3: Understanding consent in action.) Key points to elicit or explain include:
   - Everyone has the right to feel safe.
   - Violence is not okay.
   - Some problems are too big to deal with by ourselves, so that is when we need to tell to get help.
   - Nothing is so awful that we can't talk to someone about it.
6. If you think the class would benefit from another worked example, choose one of the additional help-seeker scenarios and repeat the process. If you assess that they are ready to apply the model to a scenario as part of a small group task, arrange for students to form small groups, and allocate them one of the scenarios. Ask them to use the No, Go, Tell model to advise the character.
   - No – How? (Suggest how the character might say no.)
   - Go – Where? (Suggest where the character might go.)
   - Tell – Who? (Suggest who the character might tell.)
7. Invite students to report back from their table groups, first reading their help-seeker scenario, and then sharing their advice.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

8. Inform students:

   'In our next lesson, we will practise asking for help in response to gender-based violence.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.
9. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask the students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe, confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
10. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Review the learning intentions and invite students to think about what they learnt in the activity and to share this with a partner. Ask some pairs to share with the class. Ask some students to summarise each level of the No, Go, Tell model as a reminder to the class.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

‘Help-seeker’ scenarios - Thinking up some advice

Scenario 1:

Students were lining up at the swimming pool, waiting until they were allowed to get in. Bruno was behind Millie. He began to pull the straps of her bikini top, and asked if she had any breasts to hide there yet. Troy joined in by laughing. She told them to stop but they didn’t.

What could Millie do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Scenario 2:

The girls and boys in Mr B’s class were changing into their costumes for the school production.

While Julia was just in her underwear, Shantini took a photo of her on a class iPad. Julia asked her to delete it, but Shantini laughed and showed it to some other students.

What could Julia do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Scenario 3:

Students in Ms P’s art class are working on group projects. Ella is working with Marcos and Elija.

At the end of the lesson, Marcos says to Ella, ‘You have to clean up because you’re the girl.’ When she says no and tells them they have to help too, Marcos pinches her arm really hard. He tells her he’ll hurt her more if she tells the teacher.

What could Ella do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Scenario 4:

Sabal and his friends go to AusKick on Saturdays and play footy at recess and lunch every day at school.

When Sabal tells his friends that he can’t go to AusKick for the rest of the season because he is learning dances for a big festival with other Indian families, his friends tease him, saying, ‘Sabal dances like a girl.’

What could Sabal do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Scenario 5:

On casual clothes day, Sakura wears her favourite dress to school.

At recess, 2 other girls in Sakura’s class tease her about her dress, saying it makes her look like she’s a baby. They tell her that she should dress like them if she wants to be a proper girl. One of them says Sakura should go and play with the Preps because they will like her dress.

What could Sakura do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Scenario 6:

At lunch time, some older boys came and took the new football that Kaiya got for his birthday.

At the end of lunch, they just left it down on the oval and Kaiya had to go and find it. The next day it happened again. On the third day, Kaiya and his friends tried to say no, and to hang on to the ball, but the bigger boys ran off with it.

What could Kaiya do?

- No – How?
- Go – Where?
- Tell – Who?

Topic 08

Activity 5: Practising asking for help in response to gender-based violence

Informed by the evidence base

Family and sexual violence occurs across all cultures, ages and socio-economic groups in Australia.[76] Successful prevention education programs teach children that it is not their fault if they experience abuse, and also build self-protection skills.[90] School-based abuse prevention programs have been found to be effective in increasing student knowledge and protective behaviours.[91-93] These programs aim to build children's comfort level in disclosing inappropriate sexual advances.[91] Research highlights that programs are more likely to be successful if they teach prevention skills through active rehearsal via role-play, rather than passive learning (for example, watching the teacher model skills or viewing a film).[91-93] Role-play activities can play a part in normalising help-seeking as a legitimate response. Applied participatory methods like role-play are central to the effectiveness of prevention education programs that aim to build prosocial skills and attitudes.[12] This is because it is more challenging to show a strategy in action than to describe it as an option.

When students role-play they also benefit from 'standing in the shoes' of others.[94] This can assist in the development of empathy. The development of empathy is pivotal in the prevention of discrimination and violence. Peers who have an empathetic engagement with the target of violence are more likely to proactively respond with acts of support or kindness, and those with rights-affirming attitudes are less likely to engage in gender-based violence.[54, 55] Teachers with higher levels of empathy and greater awareness of the effect that violence can have on victims are also more likely to intervene when they see or hear about instances of bullying.[95]

Learning intentions

- Students will explain how they can combine trust and courage when they need to seek help.
- Students will identify ways to use the 'tell' step in the No, Go, Tell model.
- Students will practise ways to seek help for gender-based violence.

Equipment

- 'Help-seeker scenario' cards
- No, Go, Tell model poster (create a large poster or write the model on the board)
- Pens, pencils and notebooks or digital devices
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: Talking about trust, helping and help-seeking

1. Inform students:

   After starting with a game, we will be practising ways to ask for help, using scenarios about people who have been affected by different types of gender-based violence. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Explain that students will play a game called Guide on the Side, designed to help them think about when we can be independent and when we need to turn to others for help.

   In Guide on the Side, students will work in pairs. One person in the pair will have their eyes closed, the other person will be their helper – the 'guide on the side'.

Encourage students to make choices about what works best for them. They should seek consent and agree on how the person and their guide will touch (it may be a hand on the other's elbow or shoulder), and who will initiate the touch. Students who prefer not to play may elect to be 'safety officers', who watch out to make sure no one bumps into anything, or 'reporters', who feedback their observations after the game.

The guide will lead their partner (who will try to keep their eyes shut) around the room, with contact as agreed, like holding them by the elbow. The guide must make sure their partner does not bump into anything. The guide's aim is to get their partner across (or around) the room, without bumping into anything or anyone. Above all, their aim is to keep their partner safe!

3. Allow pairs to start walking around the room. Permit students to peep, but explain that needing to peep may be a sign that the guide may need to do more to help them feel safe, like making encouraging comments or explaining what is happening. Encourage all guides to take a high level of responsibility for helping their partner to stay safe and feel secure. After a couple of minutes, ask pairs to swap roles. If the space is small, or the group is large, reduce the number of pairs playing at the same time to a safe number and rotate students through the game, with reporters and safety officers watching on.
4. After the game, discuss:
   - What did our reporters or safety officers (if any) notice about what happened?
   - What is it like to trust someone else like this?
   - What was it like to be responsible for someone else's safety?
   - Which of these feelings might we have when we are helping someone in real life?
   - Which of these feelings might we have when we need to trust someone in real life, so that we can get the help we need?
   - How do we know when to be independent – or handle things by ourselves – and when to reach out for help?

Part B: Seeking help in response to gender-based violence

1. Remind students about the No, Go, Tell model. Ask some students to remind the class about the different steps of the model.
2. Explain that in this activity, the class is going to use the scenarios they worked on in the last lesson (when they thought of lots of good advice for the 'no', 'go' and 'tell' steps) but this time they will practise the tell part of the model. They will show in their role-play how someone could 'tell' or ask for help. Ask students:
   - What character strengths do people need to use to seek help? (For example, courage, bravery or persistence.)

   Acknowledge that there can be some key challenges when it comes to the act of help-seeking. These can be:
   - working out what to say or do
   - working out who to ask
   - finding the courage to take action
   - finding the words to say.
3. Explain that when we have thought of a trusted person to ask for help, we then have to work out what to say. The next activity will give students a chance to practise some key steps that can be useful when we are help-seeking. Introduce the following key steps and display them on the board.
   - **Step 1:** Tell the person you need help.
   - **Step 2:** Say what the problem is (name the problem).
   - **Step 3:** Say how it makes you feel.
   - **Step 4:** Ask for help.

   Provide an example of what the key steps might sound like. Ask a child to sit in your chair to act as the teacher, while you role-play the student. Possible examples include:
   - '[Teacher's name], I need some help please. I'm feeling scared. Some big kids are being mean to Liz and they won't stop, and she's crying.'
   - '[Teacher's name], can I talk to you? I feel really worried and I don't know what to do. Grown-ups are fighting in Paloma's house and I'm scared she'll get hurt, but she made me promise not to tell.'
4. Review the 'Helping hands' activity from Topic 6 (Activity 4). This helps to focus on the 'who' to tell. If you have not previously done the 'Helping hands' activity with your class, take the time to help students brainstorm a range of trusted people they could seek help from.
5. Arrange students into groups of 3 or 4. Allocate each group a 'Help-seeker scenario' card. Ask them to read their scenario and use the worksheet to think about who the character could ask for help and what they could say. They may wish to have 2 people go together for help, while the other people act as the helpers.

   Once groups have had time to make their plan, ask them to work out who will play the help seeker or seekers and who will play the part of the helper or helpers. They will then practise their role-plays. One or 2 students will play the character who is seeking help and the others will play trusted people who they are seeking help from.

6. Give students time to practise before asking one or 2 groups to perform their role-play for the class. Acknowledge what has been accomplished to reinforce the model. For example, 'I understood clearly what help your character needed, Nat. You said how you felt. You said you had a problem too big to solve by yourself. You explained what had happened and how it made you feel.'

   Use the following questions to invite modelling of additional options and possibilities:

   - What else could the help seeker say to make sure the helper understands the problem? (Model some different ways of asking.)
   - In some of the scenes, we saw characters take a friend with them so they did not have to ask for help on their own. What might it be like if you have someone to go with you when you are help-seeking?
   - What can people do if the person they go to for help is too busy or won't listen, or they don't get the help they need?

   When acknowledging student contributions, draw attention to the importance of the strengths of courage, determination and persistence.

7. Refer back to the No, Go, Tell model. Remind students that they have the right to say no if someone is doing something to make them feel scared, unsafe or uncomfortable. If the person won't stop, they can go to a safer space if possible, or try to find a way to keep themselves safe. They can tell someone about what has been happening. They can ask for help. If the first person they tell is not helpful, they can tell or ask someone else. They have the right to be respected. Other people have a responsibility to help them.

8. Connect students to the Kids Helpline numbers and website, in case they would like to access further support from a helpline when they are not at school. Explain that sometimes a person might not seek help until a long time after the experience. However, it is still useful for them to get support, even if it comes later.

   Let students know that Kids Helpline is a free, 24-hour counselling service for Australian kids and young people. Telephone and online counselling is available. You could write the number on the board – 1800 55 1800 – and have students record it. You might want to demonstrate what people see if they access the web address http://www.kidshelp.com.au/

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Inform students:

The final Topic 8 activity will look at tricky or challenging situations that may set off our early warning signs that let us know we need to seek help. Our early warning signs can tell us that something seems uncomfortable or unsafe. Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get some support.

9. Organise for students to review or renew their 'Helping hands' images first completed in Topic 6, Activity 3. Encourage them to see that the people they listed are all people who can give help, as well as ask for help, and that to be able to give and to ask are both important strengths.

10. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

11. Conclude this activity following the review section of the lesson with a friendly game to lift the mood. You could choose one of the games suggested in the Optional games section of this resource or replay one of the games from Topic 2 (Personal Strengths).

Coaching point:
Using solutions-focused approaches in role-play. Avoid naturalistic re-enactments of violence in classroom role-plays. They can attract laughter in response or become the most riveting part of the presentation. This can inadvertently work to normalise the violence or to minimise its negative impact.[96, 97] This is particularly true when those role-playing the target feel they must show their 'strength' and thereby refuse to reveal the negative effects of the victimisation upon them. Use the help-seeking role-plays to show the help-seeking action, not to re-enact the gender-based violence in the scenario.

Review

To review the learning intentions, ask students if they believe that they were able to show they know ways to ask for help if they or someone else is affected by gender-based violence.

Invite students to name some of the strengths they showed through their role-plays.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

‘Help-seeker’ scenarios - Role-play version

Scenario 1:

Students were lining up at the swimming pool, waiting until they were allowed to get in. Bruno was behind Millie. He began to pull the straps of her bikini top, and asked if she had any breasts to hide there yet. Troy joined in by laughing. She told them to stop but they didn’t.

Millie decides to ask for help. Show what she does.

Scenario 2:

The girls and boys in Mr B’s class were changing into their costumes for the school production.

While Julia was just in her underwear, Shantini took a photo of her on a class iPad. Julia asked her to delete it, but Shantini laughed and showed it to some other students.

Julia decides to ask for help. Show what she does.

Scenario 3:

Students in Ms P’s art class are working on group projects. Ella is working with Marcos and Elija.

At the end of the lesson, Marcos says to Ella, ‘You have to clean up because you’re the girl.’ When she says no and tells them they have to help too, Marcos pinches her arm really hard. He tells her he’ll hurt her more if she tells the teacher.

Ella decides to ask for help. Show what she does.

Scenario 4:

Sabal and his friends go to AusKick on Saturdays and play footy at recess and lunch every day at school.

When Sabal tells his friends that he can’t go to AusKick for the rest of the season because he is learning dances for a big festival with other Indian families, his friends tease him, saying, ‘Sabal dances like a girl.’

Sabal decides to ask for help. Show what he does.

Scenario 5:

On casual clothes day, Sakura wears her favourite dress to school.

At recess, 2 other girls in Sakura’s class tease her about her dress, saying it makes her look like she’s a baby. They tell her that she should dress like them if she wants to be a proper girl. One of them says Sakura should go and play with the Preps because they will like her dress.

Sakura decides to ask for help. Show what she does.

Scenario 6:

At lunch time, some older boys came and took the new football that Kaiya got for his birthday.

At the end of lunch, they just left it down on the oval and Kaiya had to go and find it. The next day it happened again. On the third day, Kaiya and his friends tried to say no, and to hang on to the ball, but the bigger boys ran off with it.

Kaiya decides to ask for help. Show what he does.

Topic 08

Activity 6: Seeking help in tricky situations

Informed by the evidence base

Adults who abuse children can use very sophisticated grooming techniques to elicit their trust. They may initially befriend a child (and their family), providing attention, praise, fun and/or gifts. They may work at making the child feel special. Adult perpetrators can lead a child into thinking that the activity is their fault. They often instil fear or guilt, or a sense of closeness, all of which can drive the child to keep the abuse secret.[98, 99]

Given the subtle nature of grooming behaviour, it can be extremely difficult for children to recognise that they are being manipulated.[98, 99] Children and young people also face many barriers in disclosing sexual abuse.[100] These include factors such as living in families with multiple problems like family violence, substance abuse, mental health problems or absence of adults and peers who they can confide in; fear of not being believed; feelings of shame; inability to understand abuse; lack of adequate help-seeking knowledge; stigma about disclosing sexual abuse; direct threats made by perpetrators [101];[102] and children's fear of family break-up.[103]

Research shows that most child sexual abuse victims either do not disclose their sexual abuse or wait for a long time before they disclose.[104] Disclosure by a child is more likely to happen accidentally, rather than purposefully.[105] 'Accidental' disclosure often occurs due to observation and follow up by a third party, who follows up a concern or suspicion [106]. Disclosures are often tentative, can be partial or full, and may be followed by a retraction.[107] The provision of safe spaces where adults ask children about their circumstances, notice their struggles and listen to their concerns can enable disclosure of child sexual abuse.[100] In addition, providing age-appropriate prevention education that identifies abusive situations have proved to be effective in increasing the likelihood of disclosing sexual abuse.[81]

Learning intentions

- Students will identify ways to seek help if affected by violence or inappropriate forms of bodily contact enacted by adults.

Equipment

- 'Tell, tell, tell' scenarios
- Pens and notebooks or digital devices
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   In this part of the lesson, we will be looking at scenarios where people have been affected by different types of gender-based violence. We will also be talking about ways to ask for help. These scenarios will include when it is a grown-up who has done the wrong thing to a child. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me or to another teacher or helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay. Remember to be considerate in the way you discuss situations like this and think about how your actions may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Provide positive feedback to students on the skills and knowledge they have already shown in previous lessons about how to help-seek, how to be consent detectives, how to use the No, Go, Tell model, how to listen to early warning signs, and how to understand that we all have the right to have people respect our body boundaries.

3. Explain that in this activity, students are going to listen to some more scenarios and work out how the child in the scenario can use the No, Go, Tell model in a situation that they are finding tricky because it involves an adult. Some children are not sure if they can use the No, Go, Tell model when it is a grown-up who is crossing their body boundary or entering their personal space, or if it is an adult who is

hurting someone. These scenarios will help to show that you can use the No, Go, Tell model when a situation involves grown-ups, even if it feels more tricky, or if you can only do the 'tell' part.

4. Guide students through each 'Tell, tell, tell' scenario, addressing these key considerations:
   - Who feels uncomfortable or unsafe in this situation? What are some of their warning signs that things might not be okay?
   - Was a child in this story asked to keep an unsafe secret?
   - Who in this story needs some help?
   - Who could they ask for help?
   - What could they say when they ask for help?
5. Reinforce the ways that students have identified that children can choose a trusted adult to tell if something is making them feel unsafe or distressed, and that they have lots of suggestions about how to ask for help.
6. Remind students of the help sources and help-seeking pathways in the school. Encourage their use of the Feelings Feedback Box and re-iterate that they can also ask to speak with you. Remind them that they might prefer to speak to a parent or carer, or another trusted adult, if they have a worry.
7. Remind them that Kids Helpline is a free, 24-hour counselling service for Australian kids and young people. Telephone and online counselling is available. As in Activity 5, you could write the number on the board – 1800 55 1800 – and have students record it. You might want to demonstrate again what people see if they access the web address http://www.kidshelp.com.au/
8. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe, confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
9. To lift the mood following the review section of the lesson, choose a happy song and invite the class to sing and/or dance together to remind everyone that they make the world a happier place when they share friendship and respect. Or, choose a group game to play and invite the class to enjoy working as a team. (See the games section at the end of the unit for possible games, or replay a favourite game.)

Review

Invite students to name some of the strengths that the class has shown in thinking about what people can do to get help if they are troubled or in a tricky situation.

Coaching point:
Why we use sensitive scenarios. The scenarios provided in this activity are designed to have the class focus on what a victim or peer can do to get help for a potentially serious, or persistent problem relating to gender-based violence. Students should not be asked to reveal or share their own experiences on this topic in the public space of the classroom. Invite those who wish to follow up about a concern to talk privately, either with a teacher or wellbeing staff member, or other trusted adults.

You must follow the department's PROTECT guidance and Four Critical Actions if you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- How do you use opportunities during the school day to recognise students for their respectful, peaceful and fair behaviours?
- How might you reinforce student engagement with the No, Go, Tell model in timely ways across the school term?

Talking further

- Encourage students to update, share and discuss the 'Helping hands' tool they created in Topic 6, Activity 3 with their families.

‘Tell, tell, tell’ scenarios

Scenario 1:

Jackson was a bit scared of Trevor, his mum’s friend. Trevor always wanted to play with Jackson in the back room, holding his hand to show him how to paint the model planes they made together, and giving him lollies. Jackson would rather play outside with the kids from next door. When Jackson says he wants to go play outside, or when he says he doesn’t want Trevor to hold his hand while he paints, Trevor gets cross and that makes Jackson feel shaky inside. Jackson wants to tell his mum that he doesn’t want to do stuff with Trevor anymore. But he’s worried about saying this because Trevor is an adult and a friend of his mum.

- Did Jackson have some early warning signs (EWS) that this was not an okay situation for him? (Did he feel uncomfortable or unsafe?) What were these warning signs?
- Jackson decides to ask for help. Let’s work out together who he could go to and what he could say.

Teacher note: This scenario can help alert children to their early warning signs (often felt as bodily sensations) that tell them some forms of touch do not seem okay. It can also legitimate their right to say no, to go and to tell. It can help children to understand that they can report adults who transgress their body boundaries, just as they can report peers who might do this.

Scenario 2:

Paul’s dad sometimes gets angry and hits his mum. Paul and his older brother usually hide in their room when this happens. Paul’s brother says they should keep this a secret. But Paul feels shaky and sad when the fighting happens, and when he hears his mum crying. He also feels anxious and scared about keeping it a secret. The next day after the fighting, Paul always finds it hard to concentrate or to join in at school. One day, Paul’s teacher notices he is looking troubled and asks if he is okay.

- Did Paul have some early warning signs (EWS) that this was not an okay situation? What were they?
- Was Paul told to keep an unsafe secret?
- Paul decides to tell his teacher about what has been bothering him. Let’s work out together what he could say.

Teacher note: This scenario can help alert children to their right to be safe from violence in their homes, and to identify that witnessing violence has negative effects. Use of this scenario can also help to legitimate disclosure, or the ‘tell’ phase of the No, Go, Tell model.

Scenario 3:

Tony (the man who lives next door to Tegan) often wants to come over and often offers to play with her. He also hugs her a lot and for a long time. He asks her to come and sit on his lap while he reads her stories. She doesn’t like to sit on Tony’s lap. It makes her feel sort of trembly. So she says ‘no thanks’, and says she wants to sit on the floor. He says he has some lollies to share with her while she sits on his lap, and it will be fun to read and share the lollies together this way. She says no again, because she does not want to sit on his lap. He puts the lollies away, and says he will take them home with him instead. Then he asks her to change her mind. She says no, because she does not want to be hugged.

- Did Tegan have some early warning signs (EWS) that this was not an okay situation for her? What were they?
- Tegan decides to ask for help. Let’s work out together who she could go to and what she could say.

Teacher note: This scenario can help alert children to their right to be safe from inappropriate touch, and to covert forms of pressure like threats and bribery. It can help to legitimate disclosure, or the ‘tell’ phase of the No, Go, Tell model, and help children to understand that they can report adults who transgress their body boundaries, just as they can report peers who might do this.

Optional additional games to promote respectful relationships

Informed by the evidence base

Games can help the class learn to mix well with each other and to build group cohesion and social confidence. Games can be used to teach social and emotional competencies. [34, 108] They can also be used to revisit and reinforce inclusive gender messages, and to acknowledge and reward the class for their efforts, or as 'time out' when students have been experiencing frustration, fatigue or conflict. Having positive experiences in playing with each other in large collective games can help class members to feel more connected to each other and to school.

This is important, as a sense of connectedness or belonging to school is a significant protective factor for young people and contributes to building their resilience. Children and young people who feel cared for by people at their school and feel connected to learning are more likely to be motivated, and show improved academic outcomes and academic self-efficacy [109].

Coaching point:
Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can be used to help students to mix and to strengthen social connectedness, which is a protective factor for mental wellbeing. Structured play can assist those who are anxious in social situations to participate with their peers. Games can also be used to advance social and emotional skills.[39] Following participation in the game, ask students to identify the skills they used which can also be used in other life situations. Encourage them to find key 'messages' in the games about how to conduct respectful relationships. Games can also be used to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise the class, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

The Sam Says Game

Coaching point:
Resisting gender policing. This variation on 'Simon says' called 'Sam says' can be used to reinforce what people *can* do. This is an important enabler for students as they work to resist limiting gender norms and the peer pressure and comments that can accompany them.

Method

1. Explain that this game is similar to 'Simon says'. But it is also a little bit different. (Point out that you have chosen 'Sam' because it is a gender-neutral name – it could be used for a person of any gender.) When the leader calls, 'Sam says everyone jump' (or gives an alternative movement instruction), then the class must copy that move. But when the leader just calls out 'Everyone jump' (or gives a different movement instruction) and does not add 'Sam says', then the class must not do that movement.
2. Play a few rounds of the game so everyone gets to practise. Eliminate those who get it wrong, but only for a few rounds. Intermittently include 'Sam says, everyone can join back in the game – even if they went out' so students who went out can re-join.

Review

What did we need to be able to do to play the game well? How do we use those skills in class, in the playground and at home? What is a key message in the game about what people can do to work and play well with anyone in their class?

Giant's Treasure Game

Coaching point:

Promote group problem-solving. The Giant's Treasure Game can be used to develop skills in self-control and stillness. It can also be used to develop awareness of the possibility of team play and alertness to the availability of others to assist in solving a problem or addressing a challenge.

Method

1. Appoint one student from the group to be 'the giant' and to stand at one end of the room, facing the wall, with a soft toy placed on the floor directly behind them.
2. Ask the rest of the group to line up along the wall at the opposite end of the room.
3. While the giant has their back turned, the group must creep forward and attempt to steal the treasure, then run all the way back to the opposite wall without being caught. However, as the group creeps forward, the giant may turn around at any time.
4. When the giant turns around, the group must freeze. If the giant sees any of the players move, those players must go back to the beginning wall and begin again.
5. The person who succeeds in stealing the treasure and running back to the back wall with it becomes the new giant. If the giant catches anyone with the treasure before they get back to their base line, they become the giant's helpers, and may do all the same moves as the giant.
6. Once the game is well-established, explore the possibility of teamwork. Stop the game and ask students: 'I wonder if there is a way that we could get the treasure to the back wall more quickly? How might we do this?' Elicit or suggest an answer if needed, saying, for example, 'Maybe if we worked together, passing the ball to a player further back?'
7. Play some more rounds using this cooperative technique.

Review

Ask students to identify some messages we can learn from this game. How did they make sure it was fair and friendly for everyone? How did they show cooperation? (What did they do? What did they say?)

Animal Groupings Game

Coaching point:

Encourage mixing. This game can be used to help students to mix into randomly assigned groups, and to talk about the benefits of being able to work and play well with others, regardless of difference.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Animals cards (create sets of animal cards, containing groups of 4 matching animals – for example, 4 ducks, 4 cows, 4 dogs, 4 snakes, 4 cats and 4 birds)

Method

1. Give each student an animal card. The card will tell them if they are a dog, chicken, cow or mouse. They do not show this card to anyone. Tell students how many cards you distributed in each category. (For example, 'There are 5 in each category, except for the mouse, who only has 4.')
2. Ask the players to stand up and mix evenly within the space made by the circle of chairs. When the whistle blows, they must find their group. The only sound they can make is that of their animal (for example – a dog can bark, a chicken can cluck, a cow can moo, and a mouse can squeak). They need to find the other members of their animal group, using the sounds as the clue, and moving in slow motion so as not to cause any injuries. They should make their sound intermittently, rather than constantly. Once they find another person of the same animal they should join with that person and stay together until everyone in their group is located.
3. The game is finished when all have found their group. Ask students to then talk for a short time to find out something that everyone in the group has in common (in addition to their animal). For example, something they all like to do, to eat, to watch, to read, or to play.
4. Invite the groups to report back on what they found out.

Review

Reinforce the key message, that even though we are all different, we can usually also find something we have in common.

Sitting Circle Game

Method

1. Emphasise the need for safety in playing this game. Point out that this game needs everyone to do the right thing at the right time, so no one gets hurt. (Only play this game if there is sufficient room and if students will feel comfortable and work safely. Play with half the class at a time for greater control.)

   Offer options for those who prefer not to play. For example, students could take on the roles of 'safety warden' (who will stand near you and help watch out for a possible accident), 'cheer squad' (who will applaud or encourage during or after the game), 'coach' (who will make suggestions about how to make improvements when re-playing the game), or 'reporter' (who will share with the group, after the game, what they noticed).

2. Ask students to stand in a circle, all facing in one direction (for example, clockwise). They will therefore be facing the back of the person in front of them. They should stand close enough to be able to touch the outside elbow of the person in front of them with their outside hand, and should be in a well-shaped circle.

3. On the count of 3, each person is to slowly sit so they are seated on the knees of the person behind them. This will mean that each person is holding up one other person. On the count of 3 ask them to rise.

4. If time allows, repeat the game. This time, when all are seated, ask students to wave their hands above their heads.

Review

After the game, ask:

- What team skills did people use in that game?
- Where do we need to use these same skills in the classroom, the playground and at home?
- What would it be like if everyone played their part in supporting others, like we do in this game?

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 3-4 Cross-references to catching on								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help - seeking	Gendered violence
Introductory activities	●	●	●					
TOPIC 1: Emotional literacy								
Activity 1: What do emotions look like?	●							
Activity 2: Emotional triggers	●							
Activity 3: Emotions across the school day	●							
TOPIC 2: Personal and Cultural Strengths								
Activity 1: How we use our personal and cultural strengths	●	●	●					
Activity 2: Respect for people, respect for Country	●	●						
Activity 3: Using strengths to grow respect	●	●	●					
Activity 4: Using our strengths in different situations	●	●	●					
Activity 5: Respect for diversity	●	●	●	●				

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 3-4 Cross-references to catching on								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help - seeking	Gendered violence
TOPIC 3: Positive Coping								
Activity 1: IActivity 1: Using games to talk about coping	●							
Activity 2: Coping when we feel strong emotions	●							
Activity 3: Taming angry feelings	●							
Activity 4: Making apologies	●	●	●					
TOPIC 4: Problem solving								
Activity 1: Using games to talk about skills for problem-solving	●		●					
Activity 2: Roads and roundabouts problem-solving model	●		●					
Activity 3: Problem-solving in peer situations	●	●	●					
TOPIC 5: Stress management								
Activity 1: What to do when we feel stressed	●							
Activity 2: Strategies for self-calming	●							

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 3-4 Cross-references to catching on								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help - seeking	Gendered violence
TOPIC 6: Help seeking								
Activity 1: Communication and help-seeking scenarios	●		●				●	
Activity 2: How big is the problem?	●		●				●	
Activity 3: Help-seeking sources	●		●				●	
Activity 4: Help-seeking role-plays	●		●				●	
Activity 5: Help-seeking stories	●		●				●	
TOPIC 7: Gender norms and stereotypes								
Activity 1: My individuality – The many facets of me	●			●				
Activity 2: Exploring gender stereotypes through stories	●			●				
Activity 3: We can challenge gender pressures	●	●	●	●				
Activity 4: Rights and responsibilities	●	●	●	●				

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 3-4 Cross-references to catching on								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help - seeking	Gendered violence
TOPIC 8: Positive gender relations								
Activity 1: What is violence?	●	●	●			●		●
Activity 2: What is gender-based violence?	●	●	●			●		●
Activity 3: Understanding consent in action	●	●	●		●	●		●
Activity 4: Using the No, Go, Tell model in response to gender-based violence	●		●			●	●	●
Activity 5: Practising asking for help in response to gender-based violence	●		●			●	●	●
Activity 6: Seeking help in tricky situations	●		●			●	●	●

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