Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships

Teaching for social and emotional learning and respectful relationships



VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

Level 9–10 Learning Materials

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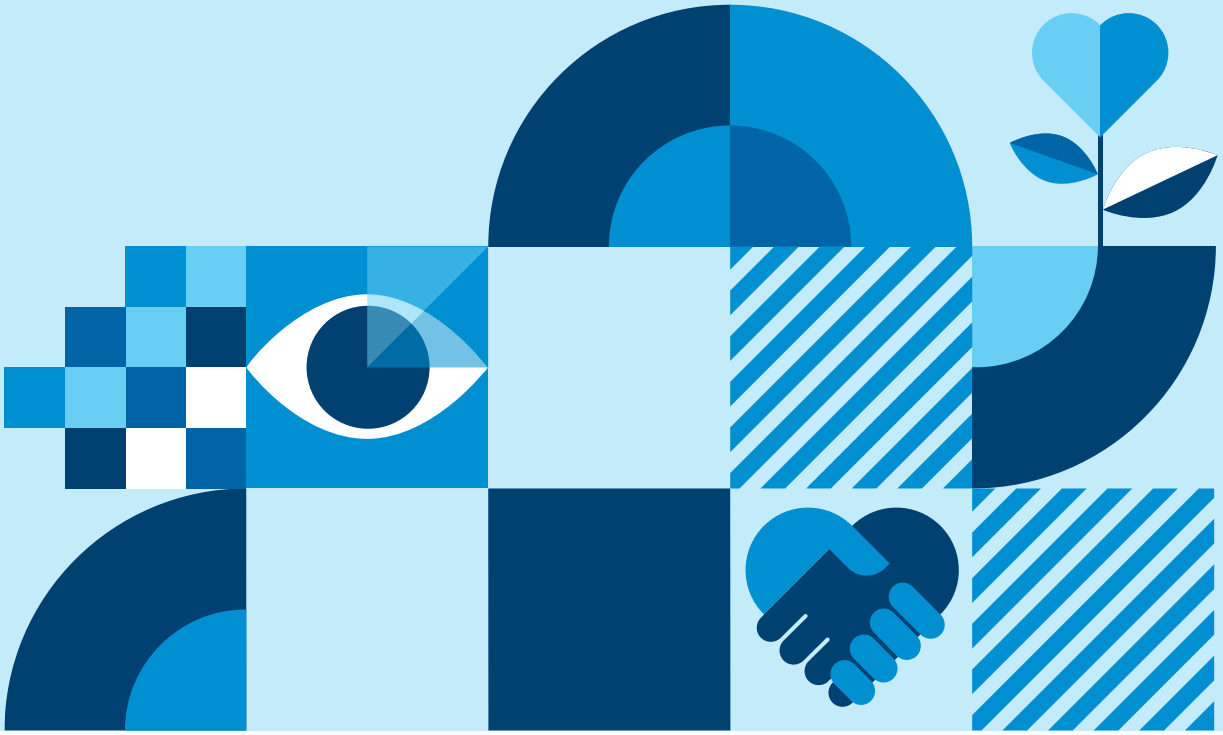
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Introduction to the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationship Resource

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 practise 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 practise. 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 practise 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 practise 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 practise 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 such 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, practises 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 practises 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 practises 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, practises 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 been, 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 practises 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 practises 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 practises 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 practises 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 9-10 Resource

Introductory activities

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- make or affirm the rules and agreements they need to support a safe, responsible and friendly learning environment in their class
- identify shared expectations for positive group cohesion.

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]

Coaching pwoint:
Sharing learning intentions. Explicitly sharing the learning intentions will help you and 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.

Activity 1: Getting to know you and co-creating class agreements

Learning intention

- Students will mix and get to know each other.
- Students will co-create agreements to support participation, inclusion and respect.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Chairs for all students
- Ball or soft toy

Method

Part A: A name game

1. Explain that this game will help students learn each other's names in a playful way.
2. Go around the circle and ask everyone to say their name. In the second rotation, ask the person to say their name and add an adjective that starts with the same letter – for example, 'Happy Hamima' or 'Lively Lichu'. As each person says their name – 'Happy Hamima' – the rest of the group echoes in one voice, 'HAPPY HAMIMA!'

Part B: Mixing the group

1. Explain that this game will help people to mix and sit with different people. It is important to be able to mix with everyone in the group. Everyone is important and valued, regardless of differences between people.

   Seat students on chairs arranged in a circle. Name each person as 'apple', 'orange' or 'banana'. Ask them to remember their category. Point out that they all belong to the category 'fruit'.

   Stand in the centre of the circle without a chair. When you call out the name of one of the fruits, all players of that category must move to a different chair. (For example, on the call of 'banana', all bananas must leave their chairs and find a different chair.) Next, the teacher should rush to a chair and the last person left without a chair will make the second call in the game. The next person after that will make another new call.

   If the category of 'fruit' is called, all players must find a new chair.

2. Play a few rounds of the game. By this time, students will be all mixed up – no longer sitting with just their friends. Stop the game and point out that we all share the category 'people' just as the apple, orange and banana share the category 'fruit'. In the class activities, all people are included and respected regardless of any differences between them.

Part C: Getting to know each other

1. Pair students with someone they are sitting next to. Ask them to spend 1 minute finding out 2 things they have in common and 2 things that are different about them. These similarities and differences cannot be visible things.
2. Ask each pair to report one similarity and one difference to the group. Point out that we have much in common, but we are also different. Difference is something to be enjoyed and respected.

Part D: Co-creating agreements

1. Invite students to co-create the agreements that they will need for everyone to feel included, respected and enabled when working on issues that are relevant to their study, relationships and physical, social and emotional wellbeing. Ask them to frame agreements positively, rather than negatively. For example, 'Listen respectfully', rather than 'Don't interrupt'; or 'Respect people's privacy', rather than 'Don't gossip about other people'; or 'Respect differences in point of view', rather than 'Don't put people down when you disagree with them'.

   Ask for a volunteer to propose the first agreement. Throw the ball or soft toy to them. Ask them to throw the ball to a peer, and then invite the selected peer to add another agreement. Continue this method of calling on the next contributor until the agreements are framed. Record the agreements on the board and arrange for students to make their own copy. Preserve a copy for display or post to a digital classroom space if appropriate.

Coaching point

Developing a safe social space. This introductory lesson provides a range of activities that 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 think about what they need to feel safe and welcome in the classroom by creating class agreements that will help to build a sense of respect and responsibility for everyone's social wellbeing.

Review

Invite students to reflect on the value of inclusion, of knowing and acknowledging each other, and how agreeing to maintain a safe, respectful learning environment will benefit everyone. Ask students to identify the part of the lesson that has contributed most to clarifying the shared responsibility for group cohesion.

Coaching point

School-wide positive behaviour. Your classroom or school may already have agreements like this in place as part of its approach to positive behaviour. Adapt the activity to suit your setting.

Activity 2: Considering statistics about mental and social health issues

Learning intentions

- Students will examine data about the prevalence of mental and social health problems affecting young people in Australia.
- Students will increase their awareness of the importance of developing skills and strategies to enhance resilience and respectful relationships.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Swap stats' cards

Coaching point

Data literacy. Some classes may benefit from having a student in each group who is confident to read and understand the data. If reading the data is challenging for the class, you can set up a 'data reading panel', comprising yourself and some student volunteers who feel mathematically confident. Invite groups to send a representative out to the panel for a data consultation, to double-check they have understood their data correctly. Encourage a 'growth mindset' by supporting all students to build their confidence to engage with statistical data.

Method

1. Allocate each group a statistics card. Explain to the class that one group member will ask the question on the card, and others will guess the answer. The card holder will then provide the correct answer. The group will then prepare to present their allocated data to the class. Their brief is to:
   a) explain what they think this data means
   b) suggest some proactive approaches that peers and teachers can take to help prevent this problem, or provide support.
2. Invite students to report back on their data, and what they think it means for action.
3. Affirm that social and emotional distress is a very real part of life, and many young people's levels of stress and distress increase as they enter their late teens and early 20s. This is why it's important to develop the social and emotional skills needed to cope with distress, and the skills needed to support friends as they go through tough times.

   The activities in this unit of work are designed to help us understand ourselves and each other better, provide positive peer support, enhance our resilience and advance our skills for respectful relationships.

Review

Invite the class to review the learning intentions. Ask students which aspects of the learning activity were most helpful when considering the mental and social health status of young people in Australia. Ask them to comment on what else they learned in this activity.

Coaching point

Updating data. It's helpful to use the most up to date information available in lessons that use data. However, recent data is not always available, and data that is not recent can remain relevant as it may show patterns that persist. To check for updated statistics, useful sources of data include the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), reports by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and the annual Mission Australia Youth Survey Reports. bullying

Statistics cards

Question: Is bullying a common experience for young people?

Answer: About 43% of Year 8 students report they were bullied monthly or weekly during the school year.

About 94% of children who used bullying-like behaviours in the past 12 months had also been bullied by others.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022. **Australia's children.** https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/australias-children/contents/justice-safety/bullying Canberra AIHW Viewed 29 June 2022

Question: Can bullying affect mental health?

Answer: Yes. Young people who are bullied at school are more likely to experience depression and anxiety than those who are not bullied.

Source: Källmén, H., & Hallgren, M. (2021). Bullying at school and mental health problems among adolescents: a repeated cross-sectional study. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 15(1), 74. doi:10.1186/s13034-021-00425-y

Question: Are mental health problems common for young people?

Answer: Yes. Mental health problems are common. Just over a quarter of 16 to 24-year-olds in Australia experienced symptoms of a mental disorder in the previous year.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. Mental health. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 01 November 2021. https://www.aihw.gov.au/mental-health

Question: What are some of the main issues of personal concern for Australians aged 15 to 19?

Answer: In 2022, the top 3 issues of personal concern for Australians aged 15 to 19 were: coping with stress, school or study problems, and mental health.

Double the proportion of females were extremely or very concerned about coping with stress (53.8% compared to 23.9% of males) and rates were higher again for gender-diverse young people (60.8%).

More than double the proportion of females were 'extremely' or 'very concerned' about mental health (45.8% compared to 21.5% of males) and rates of high personal concern about mental health were even more common among gender-diverse people, at 65.9%.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). *Youth Survey Report* 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Statistics cards

Question: Is feeling lonely a common problem for young people?

Answer: Yes. When asked about loneliness, 23.5% of young people aged 15 to 19 said they felt lonely most or all of the time. Rates were different by gender, at 44.1% for gender-diverse young people, 25.9% for females and 15.7% for males.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). *Youth Survey Report* 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What are the top three reasons young people experience discrimination or unfair treatment?

Answer: According to the 15 to 19-year-olds surveyed, the top 3 reasons for people being treated unfairly in Australia are gender (37%), mental health (28%), and race or cultural background (28%).

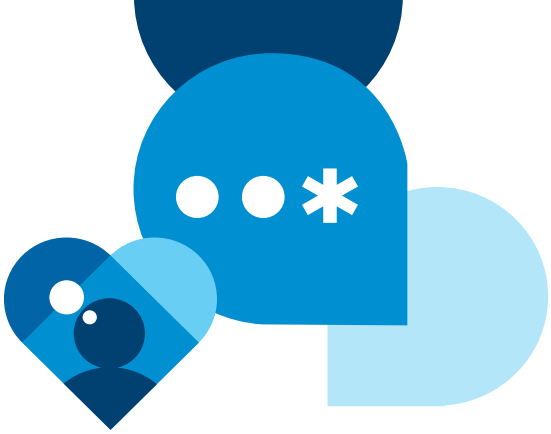
Two in five (40.2%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people reported that they had been unfairly treated or discriminated against in the past year. Almost half (48.5%) said 'race/cultural background' was the reason for their unfair treatment. The next most common reasons were mental health (39.2%) and gender (33.2%).

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). *Youth Survey Report* 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: Is sexual harassment common in Australia?

Answer: Yes. One in two women and one in four men have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 years.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia 2018*. Cat. no. FDV 2. Canberra: AIHW.



Topic 01 Emotional literacy

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- reflect critically on their emotional responses to a variety of situations and in a range of contexts
- moderate their emotional responses when expressing opinions, values and choices
- explain how relationships differ between peers, parents, teachers and other adults.

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 disabilities.[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 between 1 to 3 years post-intervention, regardless of students' race, socioeconomic 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]

Development of emotional literacy is an important foundation block of SELs. Building a large vocabulary for emotions helps to increase emotional literacy, promote self-awareness and encourage empathy for others. Developing empathy has been found to be an effective tool in reducing bullying.[13] A study conducted with children 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 children's own emotions and those of others, along with improved capacity to match their own emotions to certain situations.[14]

Topic 01

Activity 1: Understanding complex emotions

Learning intentions

- Students will demonstrate their ability to recognise complex emotions.
- Students will use a range of terms to differentiate the strength or intensity of emotions.

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 discrete binary by introducing your pronouns and checking which pronouns students use for themselves. A binary is something that consists of two 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 of, across or between the spectrum of the man and woman or boy and girl binary. A nonbinary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine or could be agender (without a feeling of having any gender or having neutral feelings about gender).[15]

Equipment

- 'Emotions' quiz
- 'Emotions' checklist
- 'Emotions' meter

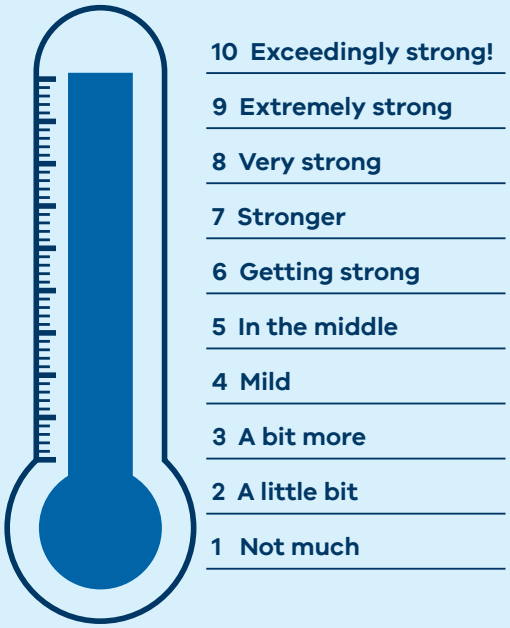
Method

1. Explain that the focus of the next activities will be looking at the emotional reactions that we may have to life situations. We will look at the techniques we use to understand and manage our emotional reactions, and those of others. Understanding and managing our emotions is a lifelong process, and we can expect to develop better skills for this over time. A 2-year-old has tantrums when they can't get what they want. But as we age, we find other ways to manage our frustration, anger or upset.

   The first activity is a quick quiz where you note your most likely emotional reactions to a list of situations. However, because we know that the emotional life of an adolescent is complex, aim to note where you might experience several different emotions at different intensities at the same time. You will be given a table of different situations, and an 'Emotions' checklist to help you think of a wide range of words for different emotions at different intensities.

2. Distribute the 'Emotions' quiz and the 'Emotions' checklist. Complete one as an example for the class. For each situation in the quiz:
   - name the emotions that you could have as a reaction (refer to the 'Emotions' checklist)
   - note which of the emotions would be 'positive' (making you feel good or comfortable) or 'negative' (making you feel bad or uncomfortable), and which would be a mixture of both
   - using the 'Emotions' meter, give a score out of 10 for the intensity of the emotion (where 10 is very intense and 1 is a mild experience of that emotion).
3. Once students have filled in the quiz, do a quick check of the number of emotions found for each situation. Ask:
   - Were any emotions identified more often than others?
   - How can we account for this?
   - What made the intensity of some of these emotions increase or decrease?

4. In the follow-up discussion, emphasise that some of the key concepts in understanding our emotional landscape include understanding complexity (or the presence of more than one emotion at once) and understanding intensity (or the variable strengths of an emotion). When we experience emotions of high intensity, which are also 'negative' or uncomfortable in nature, we may face particular challenges in managing our behaviour or our expression of these emotions.



Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions and reflect on what they learned in the activity. Ask them to comment on why it is important to be able to recognise emotions in ourselves and others.

Coaching point

Emotional literacy may vary. 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 normal to get confused, and provide positive feedback on all levels of participation. It helps to provide regular opportunities in the classroom for students to practise and build their emotional literacy.

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 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 so you end up with groups of 4 or 5 students. (The number you count to will depend on the size of your class – for example, in a class of 24, you would count students off from 1 to 6.) When you finish, ask all those who were 'number one' to form a group, and so on.
- Team-sorting apps: Using an app on a phone or tablet, students can be allocated randomly or sorted selectively ahead of time.
- Interactive challenges: For example, lining up in order of height or birth month or in alphabetical order by first or last name.

‘Emotions’ quiz

Situation	Emotions (list as many as you can)	Is the feeling positive (P), negative (N) or a mixture (M)?	How intense is the feeling? Give it a score out of 10 (where 10 is most intense)
You’ve been successful in getting the part-time job you applied for.			
Someone you have a crush on has asked you out.			
Your family gets a new dog.			
You are home alone at night and hear strange noises outside the front door.			
Your partner breaks up with you in a text message.			
Your boss at your casual job says, ‘You really stuffed that up.’			
Your teacher says, ‘Your work is incomplete and you haven’t answered the question. Please resubmit.’			
A friend thanks you for supporting them through a tough time.			
You receive an unpleasant, anonymous text message.			
You have an argument with your best friend.			
A family member is very ill.			
Your parent/carer wants you to go to a family event instead of to a friend’s birthday party.			
Your parents explain that the family has to move house due to money problems, and this will mean starting at a new school.			
You realise after you’ve told a joke that it was actually really racist and offensive to others in the class.			

‘Emotions’ list

hurt	amazed	safe	ignored
loved	hopeful	lonely	uncomfortable
angry	miserable	afraid	inspired
happy	embarrassed	confused	serene
scared	proud	shy	betrayed
excited	tense	strong	disappointed
sad	bored	anxious	determined
surprised	thankful	calm	rejected
jealous	stupid	frustrated	nervous
joyful	thrilled	furious	curious
ashamed	worried	warm	suspicious
unloved	upset	guilty	relieved
distressed	appalled	humiliated	devastated
agitated	excluded	despairing	delighted
comfortable	stunned	interested	enthusiastic
terrified	ecstatic	eager	keen
confounded	cheerful	peaceful	amused
hopeful	satisfied	relaxed	bewildered

Topic 01

Activity 2: Thinking from different perspectives

Learning intentions

- Students will identify the possible needs, wants and emotions of a range of parties affected by a situation.
- Students will explore a situation from different perspectives.
- Students will describe verbal and non-verbal cues that may signal a range of emotions.
- Students will identify strategies for problem-solving.

Equipment

- 'Perspectives' task sheet
- 'Perspectives' scenarios

Method

1. Explain that part of being able to manage relationships well is using our skills of empathy, or being able to imagine, consider or read other people's emotions. Often, this entails being able to see a situation from different perspectives. When we get into situations of conflict or disagreement, this can involve strong emotional reactions. The people involved may have competing wants or needs. Being empathetic and able to negotiate and resolve conflict requires us to be able to understand and communicate about these different wants. In the next activity, we will use a model designed to help us think about situations where people might have different needs and interests.
2. Arrange students into groups of 3 or 4.

   Draw the model presented on the 'Perspectives' task sheet on the board. Demonstrate how to do the activity using a sample scenario, and ask students to help develop the answers.

   In the boxes for each person, record answers to the following:

   - What does this person want or need?
   - What different emotions might this person have?
   - What physical clues (body language) might this person show?

   Inside the advice box, record:

   - Advice that might be useful to someone in this situation.
3. Allocate students to groups and give each group a 'Perspectives' scenario, and the 'Perspectives' task sheet.
4. Ask groups to report back on their analysis of the needs and emotions, and the group's advice. Gather feedback from the class.

   Talk about the effect our advice can have on our friends. We each have the power to accelerate upset, or to help people calm down and think through options before reacting. Asking questions can be a good way to do this. Helpful peer support questions include:

   - How do you feel about this?
   - What do you think is going on for the other person?
   - What are your needs and wants?
   - What do you think the other person's needs and wants are?
   - What might this mean for a considerate response?

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask if anyone can summarise what 'empathy' means, and what it can contribute to relationships.

Coaching point

'Inputs' box. Consider using an inputs box for students to post their questions or comments, anonymously or with their name if they prefer. Intermittently invite all students to make a contribution to the box at the same time to reduce the visibility of contributions and to encourage a safe classroom environment. Inform students that they can submit a blank piece of paper or draw an emoji if they don't have any questions or feedback. Encourage them to use this box to either 'feed forward' (make a suggestion or ask a question that will help them or the class move forward) or 'feed back' to comment on how things are working. Allow time to review students' contributions after class and use the next sessions to respond to questions or feedback as appropriate.

Coaching point

What is ableism? Ableism is discrimination or prejudice against people with disability. It is often expressed and reinforced through language that is derogatory, abusive or negative about disability. It can include being mean or leaving people out on purpose. It can also include structural barriers like a lack of wheelchair access, learning support, quiet spaces or sign language, or not asking people with disability what they need.

Perspectives task sheet

Person 1	Person 2
Needs/wants:	**Needs/wants:**
Emotions:	**Emotions:**
Body language:	**Body language:**
Advice:	

Perspectives scenarios

Scenario 1: Party pick-up

Jinyu has been invited to a party with some of Holly's friends from another school. His parents have agreed to let him go because Jinyu told them there would be no alcohol there. They've also insisted that they collect Jinyu and his friend Holly to bring them home. When it's time to go home, Jinyu finds that Holly's gotten really drunk. He's scared that this means he'll get grounded or won't be allowed to go out with Holly and her friends again.

Scenario 2: Lack of respect

Lili hates the way that Henry and his friends in her class tease her friend Rob. They make homophobic remarks about him and tease him for being too serious about his school work. Henry and his friends also make fun of Lili for being a music student, and they make racist comments about others in the class. When Lili tells Henry off, he just laughs at her, saying he's only mucking around.

Scenario 3: Breaking up?

Lowanna and Hayley have been going out for 6 months. Their 6-month 'anniversary' is today. When Hayley arrives at school, Lowanna tells her she wants them to break up.

Scenario 4: Party problems

Waru has arranged for his dad to give their neighbour Elissa a ride home from a party. When his dad arrives, Elissa's nowhere to be found. One of Waru's friends told him she left the party with some older guys who had been drinking. He's not sure what to tell his dad.

Scenario 5: Money priorities

Laura's parent tells her that they can no longer afford for her as well as her siblings to have guitar lessons. Because Laura's older siblings play in a band, they've decided to keep paying for those lessons, but not for hers. Laura really loves playing the guitar, and wants to be in a band one day.

Scenario 6: Chores

Zaina has to wash the dishes every night, and tidy and vacuum the house each week. She also has to walk her younger sister to and from primary school each day. Her older brother only has to take out the rubbish once a week. Zaina thinks it's unfair, but her mum says her brother has to study more because he's doing Year 12, so she should do the chores. Zaina can't even convince her brother to pick up their sister twice a week so she can go to basketball practise.

Scenario 7: Privacy problems

Charlie and Juan are at Jessica's 16th birthday party. Charlie takes a photo of Juan kissing Jessica. Later that night, he posts the photo online and sends it to other people in their class. When Juan and Jessica find out, they're really upset.

Scenario 8: Stolen skateboard

Mingrong has a new skateboard that took him ages to save up for. The skateboard is missing when he gets home. He discovers that his younger sibling took it to school and let a classmate use it in the playground, where it was confiscated, because skateboards are banned at school.

Scenario 9: Peer problems

Ali has hearing difficulties. His classmates tend to chat among themselves when the teacher is giving instructions, which makes it hard for him to hear what he needs to do. This situation is affecting his learning, because he can't hear all the instructions and often gets confused.

Topic 01

Optional activity: Who is Leading the Motion?

Use this game as a playful approach to start or end this lesson.

Coaching point

Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can 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.[16] Following participation in a game, ask students to identify the skills they used that 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 helpful to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise students, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

Method

1. Ask students to stand in a circle. Ask one student to leave the room. They are the detective.
2. Appoint one student to lead the movements. This person will begin slow movements (like waving or tapping) that all other students must mirror. The aim is to disguise the person who is leading the motion so it will appear that all players are moving as one. The leader must slowly change the movements so that a pattern of movement is not repeated for too long.
3. Call the detective in. This person must try to spot who is leading the motion. They only have one minute to make a guess. If correct, they will appoint the next detective, and the game will be repeated with a new leader and new detective. If incorrect, they must leave the room again, this time with an assistant detective. While they are gone, a new leader is appointed and the game repeats.
4. Ask students:
   - How is this game like things that happen in life?
   - What messages can you see in the game that are relevant in life?
   - How do we know who to follow in life?

Reflecting on everyday practise

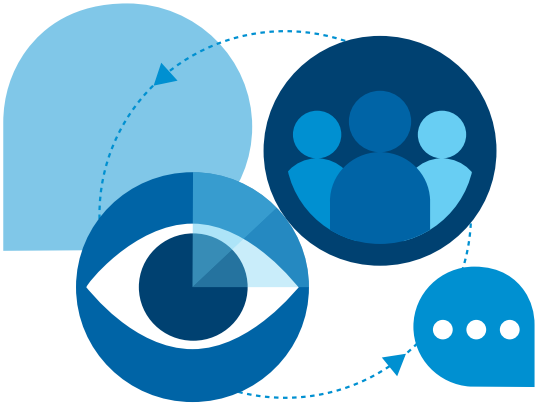
- How do you 'read' your class to consider the ways in which the emotional state of students may affect their capacity to participate in and persist with learning activities?
- In what ways do you role model emotional literacy to your students?

Extension activities for English classes

- Use a scenario from Activity 2 as the basis for a piece of writing. Invent the back story, develop the scenario and provide two alternative endings: one where the main character follows wise advice, and one where they don't.
- Give a piece of advice to a character in a text you are studying. Name the challenges you perceive them to be struggling with, and create a portfolio of advice that offers a range of possible strategies to consider.

Talking further

Encourage students to talk to their parent or carer about what helped them to follow wise advice, even when it was not easy to do, and about what kinds of advice have been useful to them in life. Students and their parents/carers could exchange some pieces of advice they would give themselves, and then discuss what sorts of strategies or supports might help them to follow this 'advice-to-self'.



Topic 02 Personal and cultural strengths

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- assess their strengths and challenges and devise strategies to address challenging situations
- analyse personal and cultural strengths that contribute to their personal and social capability
- critically analyse self-discipline strategies and personal goals and consider their application in a variety of 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

Social and emotional learning programs that use strengths-based approaches work to enhance student wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic achievement.[17-19]

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.[17-19]

Research with neurodiverse adults found that the character strengths they most commonly acknowledged and valued in themselves were honesty, appreciation of beauty and excellence, love of learning, fairness and kindness. Those who identified themselves as having the character strengths of gratitude, hope and honesty were more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction.[20]

An intervention using a focus on character strengths with neurodiverse students in the early years of primary school led to improvement in executive functioning and friendship skills.[21] 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. 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, contribution and virtues of various cultural heritages. This could include celebrating special days and festivals in the calendars of different religions and cultures that are represented in the school, as well as choosing stories that are set in different lands and cultures.

Topic 02

Activity 1: Is respect a human right?

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 will learn about the United Nations *Universal declaration of human rights*, and the United Nations declaration on the *rights of Indigenous peoples*.
- Students will develop strategies that people can use to show respect for all, regardless of differences in ethnicity, culture, heritage, religion, beliefs, genders or abilities.
- Students will engage with Aboriginal perspectives on the importance of the *United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples*.

Equipment

- Writing materials

Coaching point

Learning from Aboriginal perspectives. Books and resources by Aboriginal authors and artists provide opportunities for children to learn from Aboriginal perspectives.

Research shows that teachers can be anxious about addressing the 'Learning about 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) Indigenous Cultural Competency discussion paper (2020) 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 the 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), who have 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 (AIATSIS) **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 resources.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: What does it mean to show respect for people, place and culture?

1. Introduce the learning intentions. Inform students that they will focus on what it means to show respect for people, place and culture, and will engage with Aboriginal perspectives to deepen their understanding about the connections between respect and wellbeing. They will also learn about the ways racism affects people. This may be distressing for those who have experienced racism, towards themselves or their people. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment, and by being sensitive to the hurtful and harmful nature of racist behaviour.
2. To introduce learning about the importance of connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, share a **short video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UpcEPxUQXI published by Heritage NSW, which also notes the importance of governments recognising and respecting this heritage. Add a Victorian example by using **this video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4b1u9vx8TC8 made by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. Bunurong Country reaches from what is known as the Werribee River in the north-west, down to Wilson's Promontory in the south-east, taking in Westernport Bay, Mornington Peninsula, French and Phillip Islands.
3. Invite students to share their responses to the video. Ask students to reflect on the importance of respect for Country as well as for people.
4. Provide opportunities for students to talk in pairs or small groups about the spaces and places that are important to them, or that contribute to their wellbeing or sense of connection or belonging. Model the task and foster positive teacher–student relationships by sharing with the class something about special places that you find meaningful or that were part of your family heritage.
5. Invite groups to report back on what they noticed when they exchanged stories about places that are special to them. Acknowledge that taking an interest in other people's experiences can enrich our lives and help us build meaningful connections.
6. Invite students to share what they know about human rights and the United Nations Universal declaration of human rights. (They may have already had lessons about human rights in their Year 9 or 10 history class, as part of the curriculum.)
7. Provide a brief introduction to human rights if needed. Amnesty International has an accessible **3-minute video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6e8m8L9BFa4 that explains human rights. Invite students to respond to the video. Ask what connections they see between human rights, respect and wellbeing.

Background note

What is the *United Nations Universal declaration of human rights* (1948)? The *Universal declaration of human rights* is an international document, developed by the United Nations, which outlines the rights and freedoms everyone is entitled to. It was the first international agreement on the basic principles of human rights. It was developed following the horrors of World War II to help nations work together and solve problems in peaceful ways. Nearly every nation in the world (including Australia) has accepted the declaration.

According to the *Universal declaration of human rights*, human rights are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect. They are about being treated fairly, treating others fairly and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Some of these human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.

In summary, the declaration says that people have the right to:

- **safety and protection**, including protection from being harmed or exploited by others
- **health**, including the right to access medical care, and safe and healthy food and water
- **education**, including access to school and to mass media, and freedom from censorship
- **legal rights**, including protection from discrimination and the right to get legal help
- **political views**, including the right to vote
- **be who they are,** including freedom of religion and to express their culture land beliefs.

8. Explain that while the Universal declaration of human rights was made in 1948 soon after World War II, it was not until 2007 that the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples was made.
9. Ask students to speculate about why the United Nations saw the need to add other declarations of human rights – such as the:
   - *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women* (1979)
   - *Convention on the rights of the child* (1990)
   - *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities* (2006)
   - *Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples* (2007)
   - joint statement on *Ending violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people* (2015).

   Sum up students' contributions by noting that these additional declarations were made because these population groups continue to be the least likely to experience respect for their dignity and human rights, and continue to be most likely to experience discrimination, violence and exclusion.
10. Frame the notion that in the Australian context, 'respect' means more than everyday ways of treating others. It also means respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their heritage.
11. Consider Aboriginal perspectives by showing a video where Aboriginal people explain the importance of the *United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples* to them. (See this **10-minute video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bB2uZxekt-k from the Australian Human Rights Commission. If time is short, watch the first 2 minutes, then selected sections.)
12. Invite student responses to the video. Ask students how hearing directly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people helps them to recognise how respect is fundamental to human rights. (For example, students might note that human rights and the right to selfdetermination and cultural understanding are vital for wellbeing, as is the recognition that the effects of past trauma, violence and abuse of rights continues to affect people's wellbeing.)

Background note

What is the *United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples* (2007)?

In many countries, including Australia, Indigenous peoples have faced severe and sustained discrimination and violence. In response to this abuse of human rights, in 2007 the United Nations released the *United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples* (UNDRIP). This was the culmination of more than 20 years of negotiation between the Indigenous peoples and governments of the world. Indigenous peoples from around the world helped to write this declaration, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Australian Government announced its support for the declaration in 2009.

This declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of Indigenous peoples. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and wellbeing of the Indigenous peoples of the world and explains existing human rights standards and freedoms as they apply to Indigenous peoples.

The declaration covers all areas of human rights as they relate to Indigenous peoples. This includes the fundamental and foundational human rights of Indigenous peoples, which can be categorised into 4 key principles: self-determination, participation in decision-making, respect for and protection of culture, and equality and non-discrimination. These 4 principles provide guidance on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, governments, civil society and the private sector can apply the declaration to help fully realise the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For more information on the UNDRIP, via a guide for Aboriginal communities, see **The community guide to the UN declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples.** https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/declaration_abridged_community_guide.pdf

Do we have laws to protect us from discrimination?

We have several Commonwealth and state laws that protect people's rights not to be discriminated against. In Victoria, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) protects people, in certain areas of public life, such as at work or at school, from being discriminated against because of a protected personal characteristic, such as age, sex, gender identity, race or disability.

There are also anti-discrimination laws at the Commonwealth level that prohibit discrimination on the basis of personal characteristics in areas of public life. These laws include:

- the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) (RD Act), which promotes equality between

people from different backgrounds and protects people from unfair treatment or vilification on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin

- the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their disability and promotes equal rights, equal opportunity and equal access for people with disability
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), which protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their sex, gender identity, intersex status, sexual orientation, marital status or pregnancy and breastfeeding.
  This legislation also makes sexual harassment against the law.

The RD Act also prohibits acts of 'racial hatred' by making it unlawful for a person to commit a public act that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or group because of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin.

A 'public act' can include:

- causing words, sounds, images or writing to be communicated to the public
- acts done in a public place
- acts done in sight or hearing of people in a public place.

A 'public place' is defined as any place to which the public has access as of right or by invitation, whether express or implied and whether or not a charge is made for admission. This includes the internet when used as a place of access for the public.

The RD Act gives effect to Australia's obligations under the *International convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination*, to which Australia is committed.

Visit **humanrights.gov.au** https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation for more information on Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.

Part B: Why is respect so important in countering racism?

1. Ask students at what age they think children begin to be affected by racist views that circulate in their society.
2. Watch **'The Doll Test' video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRZPw-9sJtQ This 3-minute video shows that young children may have already internalised (or come to absorb) racist views that are harmful to them.
3. Invite students to share their reactions to the video. Ask them to speculate about how children of this age might have already absorbed race-based bias. (Here, students may suggest that white bias may be very common in children's stories, television programs and other forms of media and advertising.)
4. Provide time for students to share in pairs or small groups some of the things in their family, culture or background that they believe have influenced their ideas about how to treat others. How did they learn about respect or what is a fair and just way to treat others? Who were their role models? Choose something appropriate to share from your own experience to model the task.
5. Invite students to report back about their role models, and some of the ways they learnt about respect, justice or fairness. (Students may note that influences come from many sources, including modelling and expectations of parents, carers, siblings and extended family, from teachers, coaches, peers and religious leaders, as well as from a range of media sources.)
6. Suggest that people of their age are already role models for younger children. Pose the question: 'How could you teach young children what it means to be proud of who they are, and show respect for everyone – regardless of differences in ethnicity, abilities, gender, sexualities, beliefs or religion?' ('Young children' might mean children aged 10.)
7. Present the letter from Year 4 students at Down-the-Road Primary School, which asks for guidance.

Letter from Year 4 students at Down-the-Road Primary School

Most of us are 10 now. Things have gone bad in the playground. When we were little, people mostly just played with anyone. It was like, all in the sandpit together. Now everyone is being picky about who plays with who, and it feels kind of mean. Some kids even feel bad about who they are. What can we do to make it better?

Just so you know, we are a mix of all sorts of kids.

8. Arrange for students to work in pairs or small groups to exchange with peers in an 'I remember' activity – where they share the kinds of disputes, worries and conflicts that they remember happening for others or for themselves when they were in middle primary school.

   They should then generate some practical advice on respect and inclusion for 10-year-olds. As part of this practical advice, encourage them to address at least 2 of the following forms of diversity:

   - abilities
   - religion or beliefs
   - genders
   - ethnicity or family heritage
   - income status
   - appearance or bodies
   - skills, interests or hobbies.

9. Invite groups to report back with their suggestions.
10. To deepen the discussion, ask:

    - To what extent are these suggestions relevant for people your age?
    - What additional suggestions do you have about what is needed in respectful relationships between secondary students?
    - What would you preserve, improve or change at this school to ensure that all students, staff, parents, carers and community members feel respected and valued?

Review

Invite students to comment on how the learning activities have helped them to understand the interconnections between respect, recognition, rights and wellbeing. Ask them to comment on which resources or activities they found most useful in developing these insights and any implications for responses in their school.



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 been, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

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 child or young person. 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 who are available to provide guidance on communicating with parents and carers. For example, involving a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) or making use of the Department's interpreting and translation services: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/interpreting-and-translationservices/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'. See this explanation from Professor Mick Dodson. He is 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 title-holders 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].*

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

Extension within the English curriculum

Invite students to co-create picture story books for younger children that are designed to help them understand what it means to show respect. If possible, enable students to share their stories with children from a junior or middle primary class.

Extension within the History curriculum

The activities in this lesson may contribute to the Level 9–10 History curriculum sub-strand that addresses rights and freedoms (1945 to present), and includes a focus on:

- the significance of the *Universal declaration of human rights*, including Australia's involvement in the development of the declaration
- causes of the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for rights and freedoms before 1965
- social significance of the 1962 right to vote federally; the 1967 referendum; Reconciliation; the Mabo decision; *Bringing them home* (Stolen Generations report); and the Apology, and the different perspectives of these events
- effects of methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the role of one individual or group in the struggle
- continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia.

Engaging in school-wide activities

Support active recognition of significant key dates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to promote inclusion, learning, reconciliation and respect. Key dates include:

- 13 February – National Apology Day, anniversary of the apology in 2008 for past government policies and practises relating to the Stolen Generations
- 26 May – National Sorry Day, commemorating the Stolen Generations
- 27 May to 3 June – National Reconciliation Week. 27 May commemorates 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 in which the High Court of Australia recognised native title – the recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights over their lands did survive British colonisation.
- first Sunday in July to the following Sunday – NAIDOC week, to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 9 August – International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 13 September – anniversary of the signing of the United Nations *Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples* (2007).

The yearly **VAEAI Koorie Education Calendar** https://www.vacca.org/cultural-hub provides a list of significant dates and links to stories and other education and cultural resources.

Topic 02

Activity 2: Valuing character strengths

Learning intentions

- Students will describe and explain a range of character strengths.
- Students will consider the contribution of various character strengths and cultural strengths in different circumstances.
- Students will identify the strengths that can help people to treat themselves, others and the environment with respect and care.

Equipment

- Room to move (for optional extension only)
- 24 'Strengths' cards: (version 1)
- Additional versions of the 'Strengths' cards (versions 2 and 3 to cater for different literacy levels)

Method

1. Arrange students into groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a set of the 24 'Strengths' cards. Assign each group a context from which to consider the merits of these strengths. Contexts can include school work, sporting life, family life, social life, and career or work. Consider the literacy levels of your class when selecting which version of the 'Strengths' cards to use, as some students may work more effectively from one of the modified lists provided.
2. Ask a student in each group to deal out the cards (each person will have 5 or 6 cards). Students should then take turns around the circle placing one strength at a time on the table, ranking them from 'highly useful' to ' less useful' for equipping people to do well within their given context. Each time someone puts a card down, they should explain why they have allocated it that particular rank. When it is their turn, a player may also reorder cards placed by others, as long as they explain their choice.
3. Ask groups to think of a few examples to illustrate how the top 3 strengths they have chosen are used in the context they are considering.
4. Once the groups have finished, ask them to report back on what they put in the 'top 3' section, and to explain some of their thinking. Share some of the examples. Compare what happened in the different groups.

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.

5. Reiterate that each of these strengths can be used in any situation, although in some circumstances we may need to draw on multiple strengths or rely on some strengths more than others.
6. Ask students to review the 'Strengths' cards, and consider which of the strengths may be particularly valued and encouraged within the cultural tradition of their family or community.

   For example, some families or communities might value humour during family special events, while other families might value participating in music or sports when they get together (involving strengths like appreciation of beauty, artistry or excellence). Others might have traditions involving preparing and sharing particular foods at special times (involving strengths like generosity and gratitude).

   Encourage students to also name additional strengths valued in their cultural heritage that are not provided on the cards. Invite students to report back and, where possible, to provide examples of how certain strengths are modelled through practises, or affirmed and explicitly taught through sayings, routines and rituals conducted in the home or community context. (For example, practises that place value on fairness might be as varied as giving everyone a 'fair go' when playing backyard cricket, or an arrangement to share household chores. Fairness might be signalled via a saying like 'fair go mate' or 'fair suck of the sauce bottle'. A saying that places value on strengths like persistence and courage might be 'you will never know until you have a go'. A saying that teaches the value of acceptance or forgiveness might be as simple as 'no worries, mate'.)

In a survey of Australians aged 15 to 19, about 1 in 5 (20.2%) said they had both cultural and spiritual beliefs, another 20.2% reported holding spiritual beliefs only, and one in 10 (10.3%) held cultural beliefs only. The remainder (49.3%) said they had no beliefs.[26]

7. Ask the groups to consider which strengths might be particularly helpful in relation to treating yourself, others or the environment with respect in the context of either school, home, workplaces, community or online. Ask students to select one of these categories ('self', 'others' or 'environment') and re-rank their list of strengths to support respectful actions accordingly.

   Have students report back, asking:

   - What was your chosen focus?
   - Which were the top 5 strengths you chose to support taking respectful action in that context?
   - Did many strengths change for your context once your group focused on respectful actions? Why or why not?

   Compare and comment on the strengths listed as particularly important in the different groups and contexts.

8. **Optional home task:**
   Refer students to the **VIA Character Strengths Inventory** https://www.viacharacter.org/researchers/assessments/character-strengths-inventory-for-children to see what this test identifies as their top 5 strengths (reminding students that this does not mean they are 'low' in the other strengths). If they have done it before, they may still like to do it again to see if their top 5 has changed.

Coaching point

Supporting students to recognise cultural strengths. Some students may find it hard to identify the cultural heritage from which they have benefited. This can occur for students who have inhabited a dominant culture, and therefore have not recognised that they have a culture at all. It can also happen for young people who have not been provided with 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 school curriculum. This can be experienced as a form of discriminatory exclusion: to be left out is to be erased, or made invisible, and this can signal that one's existence is not valued.

Some question prompts that might help students to identify cultural or familial strengths could include:

- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to survive the effects of invasion, colonisation, oppression or war? (Suggestions: courage, determination, forgiveness, fortitude, resourcefulness)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to take the risk of migrating to another country? (Suggestions: courage, creativity, determination, hope or optimism)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to invent new ways to deal with problems like sanitation, food supply, reliable transport or covering large distances? (Suggestions: creativity, determination, love of learning)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to preserve traditional knowledge about how to care for people and for Country? (Suggestions: generosity, kindness, courage, wisdom, determination, resourcefulness, commitment, loyalty)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to start to repair past injustices? (Suggestions: forgiveness, honesty, courage, generosity)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to raise a family? (Suggestions: love, caring, generosity, flexibility, commitment, patience)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to live in accordance with their values or beliefs? (Suggestions: self-control, determination, generosity, loyalty, integrity)

Optional role-play version of the strengths ranking activity

1. Cut out the 24 'Strengths' cards and stick them onto chopsticks to make wands.
2. Put students in pairs. Give each pair one of the 24 cards.
3. Explain that each pair will represent a magician who can bestow a strength on the 'Teenager of Today'. However, while each of the strengths on the cards can be argued for, only 7 will be chosen by the 'Parent Panel'. Give each pair a chance to prepare an argument to convince the Parent Panel that their strength is vital and must be chosen for the Teenager of Today.
4. Organise one speaker to represent each pair. Those who are not speaking will form the decision-making Parent Panel. In turn, each speaker (magician) presents their argument, 'selling' the contribution their strength can make to others by explaining why it is the most important strength of all for a teenager growing up in today's world. (For example, the magician with the strength 'generosity' might argue that their strength is the most important because people who are generous give to others in need of support, and this in turn can enrich relationships and communities. Further, without generosity the world would be a harsh and unequal place.) When they have finished, the 'Strengths' cards can be left in a line on the floor.
5. Ask the members of the Parent Panel to look along the line of strengths, then stand behind the strengths that they believe are the most important for enabling people to treat themselves, others and the environment with respect. Eliminate the strengths that have the fewest votes. Continue until only 7 are left.
6. Ask the members of the Parent Panel to justify their preferences. Highlight the importance of each of these qualities in our everyday lives, and the contribution we make to others when we model these strengths.

Review

To conclude, invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask them to summarise some of the key messages from the activity. Ask how the activity helped them to compare and evaluate the potential contribution of different character strengths. Ask several students to identify a strength that they think schools should promote to ensure that everyone is treated with respect, regardless of their differences.

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 students. 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 (Establishing a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued), and with the **Koorie Cultural Inclusion Practise Notes Resource** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/koorie-education/resources**.**

Some actions teachers can take to establish a safe cultural space include 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); and addressing any instances of racism within the classroom directly and with appropriate consequences.

Coaching point

Unconscious bias. Remain alert to the ways unconscious bias can lead to practises like positioning the dominant group or the stereotype as the norm, and thereby signalling that difference from the norm is problematic in some way. Unconscious bias can also lead to victimblaming in situations of discrimination or violence.

Strengths cards: 1

Appreciation of beauty and excellence Ability to find, recognise and take pleasure in the existence of goodness	**Humour** Sees the light side of life and helps people to laugh
Fairness Treats people fairly and advocates for their rights	**Persistence/Determination** Focuses on goals and works hard to achieve them
Honesty/Integrity Speaks truthfully	**Bravery/Courage** Does not hide from challenging or scary situations
Citizenship/Loyalty Stays true to family and friends through difficult times	**Wisdom/Perspective** Can see things from different angles
Social intelligence Aware of the needs of others	**Hope/Optimism** Expecting a good future
Generosity/Kindness Gives freely of their time and possessions	**Enthusiasm/Vitality** Has lots of energy and excitement for life

These are the 24 character strengths identified by psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin E.P. Seligman in their 2004 book, *Character strengths and virtues*: A handbook and classification, published by Oxford University Press and and the American Psychological Association.

Strengths cards: 1

Self-control Controls desires and sticks to decisions	**Creativity** Thinks of many ways to solve challenges
Love of learning Likes to learn new things	**Forgiveness** Can move on and not hold a grudge, giving others a second chance
Love/Caring Likes to help others	**Leadership** Helps the group meet their goals
Humility/Modesty Not seeing themselves as more special than others	**Prudence/Being Careful** Thinks through the best way to do things
Spirituality Believes in a higher meaning or purpose	**Gratitude** Is thankful for what they have
Curiosity Keen to explore and discover the world	**Open-mindedness/inclusion** Is not biased or judgemental. Shows respect for difference and makes an effort to include others

These are the 24 character strengths identified by psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin E.P. Seligman in their 2004 book, *Character strengths and virtues*: A handbook and classification, published by Oxford University Press and and the American Psychological Association.

Strengths cards: 2

Hope and optimism Always looks on the bright side of things	**Humour** Sees the light side of life and helps people to laugh
Fairness Treats people fairly	**Determination** Works hard to achieve goals
Honesty Speaks truthfully	**Courage** Does not hide from challenging situations
Loyalty Stays true through difficult times	**Inclusive** Showing respect for difference, being openminded and making an effort to include others
Trustworthiness Does what they say they'll do	**Compassion** Thinks of how others are feeling
Generosity Gives freely of their time and possessions	**Enthusiasm** Has lots of energy and excitement for life
Self-control Controls desires and sticks to decisions	**Creativity** Thinks of many ways to solve challenges

These are some of the 24 character strengths identified by psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin E.P. Seligman in their 2004 book, *Character strengths and virtues*: A handbook and classification, published by Oxford University Press and and the American Psychological Association.

Strengths cards: 3

Kind You do things for others without really expecting anything in return	**Brave** You do what you know is right even when you feel scared or nervous	**Forgiving** You let go of your anger and hurt when someone has upset you
Leadership You think of things to help the group and make suggestions about what to do	**Funny** You like to laugh and to make other people laugh	**Fair** You make sure everyone is given a turn. You play by the rules
Determined When you decide to do something, you keep trying even when it is challenging	**Generous** You share your belongings with others and let them join in	**Hard-working** You will stick at doing things even when it is not easy or you don't feel like it
Honest You tell the truth even when this is not easy for you	**Self-control** You stay in control of your strong feelings, even when you feel like yelling, sulking or being mean	**Curious** You love to learn about new things

These are some of the 24 character strengths identified by psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin E.P. Seligman in their 2004 book, *Character strengths and virtues*: A handbook and classification, published by Oxford University Press and and the American Psychological Association.

Topic 02

Activity 3: Using strengths in ethical dilemmas

Learning intentions

- Students will identify strengths that people might call on to help make decisions when confronted with an ethical dilemma.
- Students will identify possible consequences of particular decisions.

Equipment

- 'Dilemma' scenario cards
- 'Thinking through the dilemma' template

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Explain that one particular instance when we may need to draw on a range of our character strengths, and on our decision-making skills, is when we face a moral or an ethical dilemma. To do this well, we have to also apply our logic, our values, and awareness of our own and others' emotions.

   Display the term 'ethical dilemma' on the board. Ask students if they know what this term means. Add a definition if it does not come from the class.

   A moral or ethical dilemma is a situation in which a person must choose between 2 competing actions, and by not taking one of the actions, do something that feels wrong.

   For example, your cat and your dog both need rescuing from a burning house, but you can only save one. Doing the right thing by your cat means doing the wrong thing by your dog (and vice versa).

   A friendship example could be that your friend asks you to keep a secret, but doing so will mean lying to your parents and other friends. Yet in sharing the secret, you may breach your friend's trust.

2. Distribute the 'Dilemma' scenarios and the 'Thinking through the dilemma' templates. Explain that each pair or small group will choose one of the scenarios and work to map the dilemma and develop a piece of advice. As part of the mapping, they will identify the possible positives and negatives of each choice, and then propose a piece of advice. Finally, they will identify which strengths they think that someone would need to call on to carry out the advice.

   Work through the following example with the class first.

   Babysitting dilemma

   You are babysitting a 6-year-old who is asleep. You realise you left your bag at home with your homework, laptop and phone in it. You promised to ring your stressed friend tonight, and you have an assignment due tomorrow that you planned to work on. No one is home at your house, which is two blocks away.

   Invite students to identify the ethical dilemmas of this scenario.

   Point students to the following useful questions when thinking about what is ethical:

   - Is it safe? Could anyone come to harm?
   - Is it fair?
   - How will it affect others?
   - Is it legal?
   - Is it honest?
   - How will I feel about it afterwards?
   - To what extent will this action show respect for self, others and the environment?
   - Is it right for me?

3. Once students have completed their task using the 'Thinking through the dilemma' template, ask some of the groups to report back.

Coaching point

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

4. Explain that the next lesson will focus on hate speech – what it is, how it can harm and violate the rights of others – and consider ways to counter hate speech by using respect as a 'pivot point' between rights and responsibilities.

   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 any students who have indicated they would prefer a modified way to participate, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for support.

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 generous of you to …', 'I saw how patient you were while …', 'I think it might have taken courage for you to …'.

Review

To conclude the activity, invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask students to consider how they might use the strategies employed in this activity in their lives.

Coaching point

Diversity of beliefs. Some students may feel that it is difficult for them to know how to support diverse peers due to their own religious, cultural or family beliefs. Some may experience this as an ethical dilemma or a tension between their school and family allegiances.

An approach that may help is to reassure students that people do not have to share the same religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds, abilities, sexuality or gender identity to show respect. Respect is about the way we treat people. School and classroom behavioural expectations and values promote kindness, respect and good treatment for all students, teachers, parents and carers, regardless of their differences.

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.)

Thinking through the dilemma

Useful questions	Option A		Option B	
	Positives	Negatives	Positives	Negatives
• Is it safe? • Could anyone come to harm? • Is it legal? • Is it fair? • Is it honest? • How will it affect others? • How will I feel about it afterwards? • To what extent will this action show respect for self, for others and/or for the environment? • Is it right for me?				
My advice:				
Some strengths* creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, perspective, love of learning, prudence (carefulness), bravery, persistence, integrity, kindness, social intelligence, social responsibility, fairness, leadership, forgiveness, humility, self-control, appreciation of beauty, gratitude, optimism, humour, spirituality, vitality (energy), love	Strengths needed to carry out this advice: • • •			

*Strengths list derived from the 2004 book Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification, written by Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman and published by Oxford University Press and the American Psychological Association.

Dilemma scenario cards

Double booked

Sanjay finds out that there's a big party on this weekend. Someone he likes asks if he is going to come. Sanjay says yes, even though he knows his grandmother's 70th birthday is on the same night and the family are all expected to be there.

Worried

Alinta is worried about a friend who's feeling down. They haven't bounced back since their relationship broke up 6 months ago. The friend has confided in Alinta about having suicidal thoughts, but asked her to promise not to tell anyone, especially not their parents. Alinta's really worried because she thinks she shouldn't keep this promise, but she's not sure how to manage getting help without causing her friend further distress.

Timing

Oliver left a major assignment until the last minute and it's due in tomorrow. He will lose 20% of his marks if he doesn't hand it in on time. His boss just called him in to do an extra casual shift from 4 pm until 11 pm. Oliver really wants the money and his boss has told him the other workers have the flu.

Privacy

Yutong's friend posted online about supporting people with disabilities. In the post, they advocated for better treatment for autistic people like Yutong. But Yutong didn't like the story, because she prefers to be described as neurodivergent, and hates being the focus of attention on social media. Yutong appreciated that her friend meant well, but she was annoyed that her story was being told by someone else, and that people were talking about her, rather than to her. She wasn't sure whether saying anything about this would be a good idea or not, or whether it would just cause a problem in her friendships.

Getting home

Siblings Eleazer and Shane are permitted to go to an 18th birthday party for a good friend. The party is 10 km away and an older cousin has promised to be the designated driver and not drink any alcohol. But as the night progresses, it becomes obvious that their cousin has been drinking and is quite affected by alcohol.

Eleazer and Shane have no alternative plan for travelling home. They're anxious about getting their cousin into trouble by letting their parents know, but they don't want to get into a car with someone who's drunk.

Topic 02

Activity 4: Recognising and challenging hate speech

Learning intentions

Students will:

- identify the characteristics of hate speech
- outline the harmful effects of hate speech on individuals, groups and societies
- analyse why hate speech may be more common online than in person
- identify strategies they can use to recognise and challenge hate speech both online and offline.

Equipment

- Writing materials or digital devices
- Data cards about negative treatment online
- 'Ten key actions to counter hate speech' list

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Explain that this lesson will focus on hate speech – what it is, and how it can harm or violate the rights of others. Students will reflect on United Nations human rights agreements and Victorian and Australian laws that document everyone's right to be protected; review data about online hate speech; and consider ways to counter hate speech by using respect as a 'pivot point' between rights and responsibilities.

Students can help each other by providing a friendly and supportive work environment. Remind students to be considerate when discussing situations of this nature and to be mindful of how their actions may affect other people.

Part A: The right to respect – does free speech excuse hate speech?

1. Invite students to share their understanding of what it meant by the term 'human rights'.
2. Provide a brief summary of the concept that underpins the United Nations understanding of human rights:

> All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.[28]

3. Explain that in 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal declaration of human rights, which sets out the basic rights and freedoms that apply to everyone.

   Australia played an active role in developing this declaration and the international treaties that followed. It is also a party to 7 major human rights treaties or agreements that set the standards for human rights scrutiny that is undertaken at a national level and outlined in the Australian Human Rights Framework.

   These treaties are:

   - *International convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination* (1965)
   - *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women* (1979)
   - *Convention on the rights of the child* (1989)
   - *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities* (2006)
   - *International covenant on civil and political rights*
   - *International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights*
   - *Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

   Several Commonwealth, state and territory laws help Australia fulfil its human rights obligations: for example, Victoria's *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter) and the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth).

   The Charter enshrines civil, political and cultural rights into Victorian law. Any limitation on these rights must be reasonable, necessary, justified and proportionate. The rights set out in the Charter reflect fundamental values or freedom, equality, respect and dignity.

> **What are human rights? The Australian Human Rights Commission explain on their 'What are human rights' page that:**
>
> Human rights recognise the inherent value of each person, regardless of background, where we live, what we look like, what we think or what we believe.
>
> They are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect, which are shared across cultures, religions and philosophies. They are about being treated

fairly, treating others fairly and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives.

Respect for human rights is the cornerstone of strong communities in which everyone can make a contribution and feel included …

Human rights can broadly be defined as a number of basic rights that people from around the world have agreed are essential. These include the right to life, the right to a fair trial, freedom from torture and other cruel and inhuman treatment, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the rights to health, education and an adequate standard of living.

These human rights are the same for all people everywhere, regardless of our background, where we live, what we think or what we believe. This is what makes human rights 'universal'.[29]

4. Note that freedom of expression is one of the rights protected under the Charter. However, freedom of speech is not unlimited because it can conflict with the rights of another person or group under the Charter, or other rights like the right to freedom from discrimination (as enshrined in other anti-discrimination laws). It is incorrect for people to think that free speech means they can make 'hate speech', which may incite discrimination or violence.
5. Ask students to work in small groups to develop a definition of what they understand to be meant by the term 'hate speech', and to provide some examples of where they might encounter forms of hate speech.
6. Invite students to report back. Provide the United Nations definition of hate speech, and invite students to compare this with their definitions. Ensure that students understand that hate speech also includes visual imagery and non-verbal communication like inappropriate, disrespectful gestures, looks, jokes, notes, signs, acts of exclusion and so on.

   The United Nations defines hate speech as 'any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor'.[30](Students may need definitions for key words used above. In this context, 'pejorative' language means using words of contempt about someone, and 'discriminatory' language means unjustly criticising, putting down or demeaning a person or group.)
7. Ask students to comment on what actions they think people need to take to strike an appropriate balance between the right to freedom of speech, and the right to equal and respectful treatment.
8. Point out that in Victoria, we have the right to freedom of opinion and freedom of expression under the Charter. People are free to believe whatever they like. However, the right to freedom of expression brings with it certain responsibilities and, as such, these rights may be limited in circumstances where it is reasonable and necessary to do so. People must respect the rights and reputation of others and the opinions expressed must not risk national security, the safety of the Victorian people or people's individual morality.
9. In addition, there are laws in Victoria and Australia that protect people's rights not to be discriminated against. These laws make it unlawful to discriminate against people in certain areas of public life, like work and school, because of an individual's personal characteristic or protected attribute – for example, their age, sex, gender identity, ethnicity or disability.

   These laws include:

- **the Equal Opportunity Act 2010** (Vic), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of a protected personal characteristic in an area of public life. It also makes it unlawful to sexually harass a person, or victimise them for speaking up about their rights or making a complaint, and includes a positive duty to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation as far as possible
- **the Racial Discrimination Act 1975** (Cth), which promotes equality between people from different backgrounds and protects people from unfair treatment or vilification on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin
- **the Disability Discrimination Act 1992** (Cth) makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of disability and promotes equal rights, equal opportunity and equal access for people with disabilities
- **the Sex Discrimination Act 1984** (Cth) protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their sex, gender identity, intersex status, sexual orientation, marital status or because they are pregnant or breastfeeding. This legislation also makes sexual harassment against the law.

Coaching point

Using the principle of respect as a 'pivot point' to balance freedom of speech and freedom of belief. The United Nations recommends using the concept of respect as a central 'pivot point' for balancing the rights to freedom of belief and freedom of expression. The way people express their beliefs should be underpinned by recognition that everyone is worthy of respect, and that all humans are equal in dignity and rights.

10. Invite students to explain the concept of respect, or provide a definition to refresh and support understanding. A definition could be constructed by referring back to the United Nations concept of human rights – 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.'[28]

Part B: Hate speech happens

1. Explain that in the next part of the activity, groups will receive a dataset to make sense of, before explaining it or sharing it with the class. Each dataset shares findings from research about negative experiences that Australians encounter online. (Some data sets will be seen by just one group, and other sets may be duplicated.

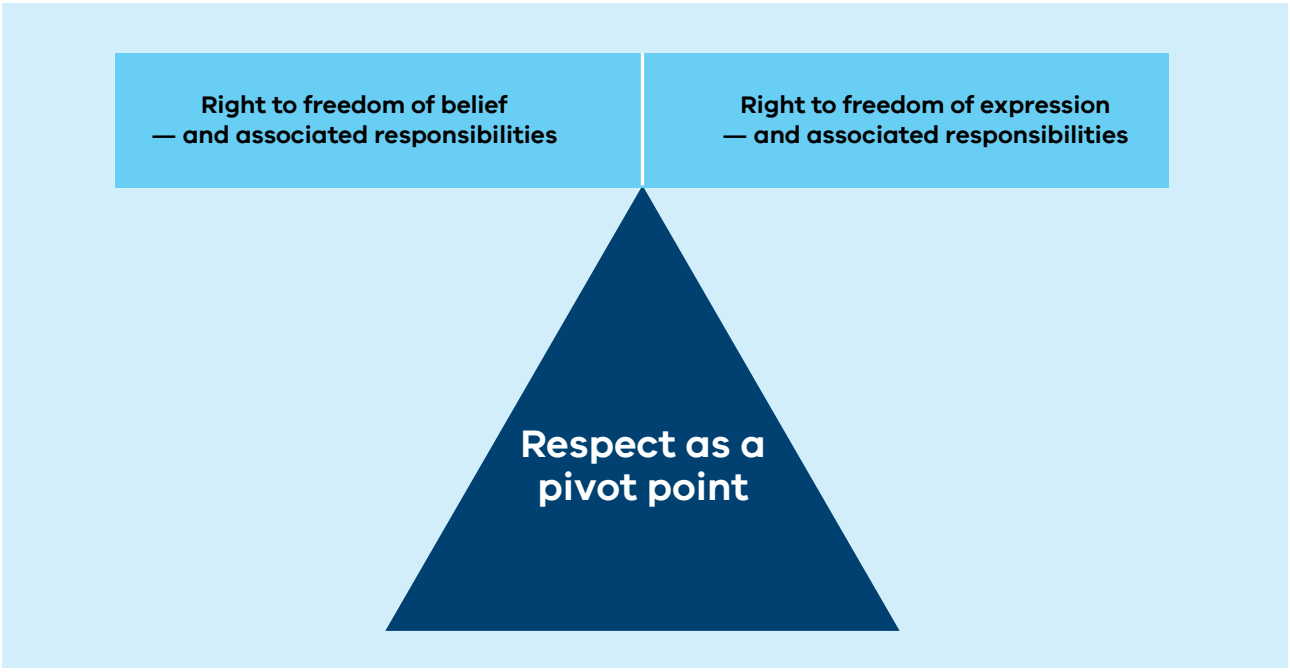
Coaching point

Data literacy. Some classes may benefit from having a student in each group who is confident to read and understand the data. If reading the data is challenging for the class, you can set up a 'data reading panel' comprising yourself and some student volunteers who feel mathematically confident. Invite groups to send a representative out to the panel for a data consultation, to double-check they have understood their data correctly. Encourage a 'growth mindset' by supporting all students to build their confidence to engage with statistical data.

2. Distribute the data cards and provide time for groups to make sense of the data, and to get ready to share what they have learnt with the class. Allow time for students to report back and discuss how this data fits with their sense of what is happening in the world.

   Questions to guide discussion as students report back could include:

   - To what extent does the data on who is more likely to be targeted via online hate speech fit with what you have seen? Do you notice any other patterns?
   - To what extent does the data on the effects of online hate speech fit with what you imagine the experience might be like?
   - To what extent does the data that shows that hate speech is becoming more common online fit with your sense of what is happening? Why do you think this might be?
   - To what extent does the data on the most common sorts of negative experiences that teenagers encounter online fit with what you know? What might help to change this pattern?



Data about treatment online

Dataset A: Who is more likely to be targeted?

In 2019, the Australian eSafety Commissioner surveyed 3,737 adults aged 18 to 65. They asked about hate speech online.[30] They found that:

- 1 in 7 (14%) had been the target of online hate speech in the previous 12 months
- experiences of hate speech were more common for young people, with 1 in 5 (20%) aged 18 to 24 experiencing hate speech and almost half witnessing it online
- 30% of LGBTIQ people and 32% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experienced online hate speech – rates that were more than double the national average.

Source: esafety (2019), Online Hate speech: Findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe

Dataset B: Where, who and with what effects?

In 2019, the Australian eSafety Commissioner surveyed 3,737 adults aged 18 to 65. They asked about hate speech. They found that:

- hate speech mostly occurred on social media platforms
- hate speech was most commonly perpetrated by strangers
- religion, political views, race and gender were the most common reasons for experiencing hate speech
- more than half (58%) of those who experienced hate speech reported a negative impact from their experience, typically mental or emotional stress, relationship problems or reputational damage.

Source: esafety (2019), Online Hate speech: Findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe

Dataset C: Is it happening more often?

In 2022, the Australian eSafety Commissioner surveyed 4,783 Australians aged 18 to 65 about their experiences online.[31] They found that negative experiences were much more common than in the previous survey, conducted in 2019.

They found that:

- 75% had at least one negative experience online in 2022 (up from 58% in 2019)
- 32% were sent unwanted inappropriate content, like porn or violent content (up from 14%)
- 30% were called offensive names (up from 12%)
- 24% had things said to offend, distress or harm them (up from 11%)
- 16% received threats online of in-person harm or abuse (up from 9%)
- 28% said this had negatively affected their mental or emotional wellbeing
- only 35% said they would stick up for someone who was the target of offensive comments (down from 39%).

Source: esafety (2022), Australians' negative online experiences 2022

Dataset D: What is happening for teenagers online?

In September 2020, the Australian eSafety Commissioner conducted a survey of 627 teens aged 12 to 17.[32] The teens surveyed spent an average of 14.4 hours a week online.

Just over 4 in 10 (44%) of teens had had at least one negative online experience in the previous 6 months. The three most common kinds of negative experience were:

- being contacted by a stranger or someone they didn't know (30%)
- receiving inappropriate or unwanted content (20%)
- being deliberately excluded from events or social groups (16%).

Nearly everyone (9 in 10) who had a negative experience online engaged in positive online behaviour afterwards. And, more than 80% took some form of action after a negative online experience – for example, blocking someone, reporting it or talking to someone about it.

Source: esafety (2021), The digital lives of Aussie teens 2021

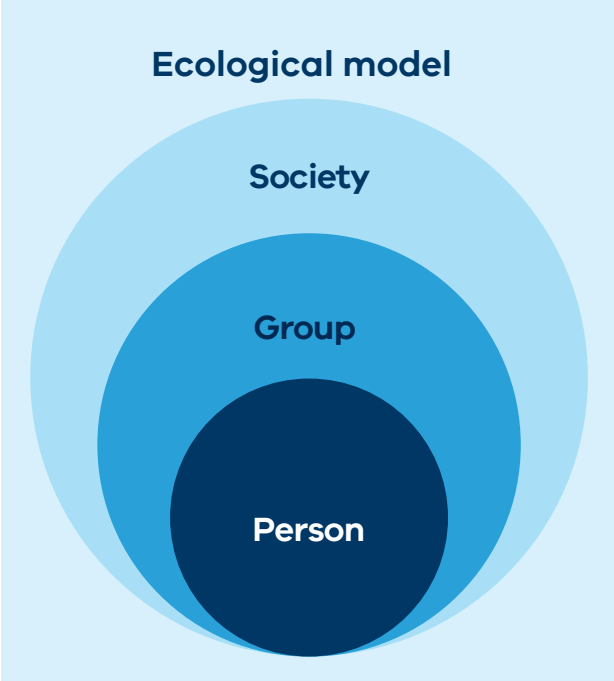
Some useful definitions

- **Racism** involves unequal or discriminatory treatment of people based on their belonging, or the perception that they belong to, a particular ethnic group, nation or 'race'. Racism is based on the assumption that one 'race' is superior to another. Racism can present itself in a variety of ways. Some are more direct and obvious, like harassment, abuse or violence. Some are indirect and subtle, like racism in everyday systems and structures that operate in ways that work unfairly and create unequal outcomes. This type of racism is called 'structural' or 'systemic' racism.
- **Misogyny** is dislike of, contempt for, prejudice against or distrust of women.
- **Sexism** is showing prejudice or discrimination based on someone's sex or gender or representing them in narrow, negative or stereotypical ways based on their sex or gender. Sexist behaviour can be based on a belief that one group is inferior to another.
- **Homophobia** is fear or intolerance of people who are, or who are perceived as being, lesbian, gay, bisexual or same-sex attracted. This is usually linked with hostility, verbal and physical abuse, or discrimination. Homophobia also includes institutional and cultural bias and structural inequality.
- **Transphobia** is prejudice or discrimination based on a person being, or perceived as being, transgender or gender diverse. Transphobia can be expressed through hostility, verbal and physical bullying or discrimination. Transphobia also includes institutional and cultural bias and structural inequality.
- **Xenophobia** is dislike of, or prejudice against, people from other countries.
- **Hate speech** is 'discriminatory' (biased, bigoted or intolerant) or 'pejorative' (prejudiced, contemptuous or demeaning) treatment of an individual or group because of real or perceived personal characteristics – for example, their gender, colour, religion, sexuality, ethnicity or nationality. Hate speech may be expressed in different ways, including through words, images, posters, memes, symbols, gestures or actions.
- **Misinformation** is false or inaccurate information. (If you think of the word mistake, this can help you remember that misinformation is mistaken – that is, false or wrong – information.)
- **Disinformation** is false information that is deliberately used to mislead or deceive others. (The 'd' in deceive and deliberate can help you remember that disinformation is deliberately spread to deceive and manipulate.)

Coaching point: supporting students to understand the context and impact of hate speech: some students may use words that constitute hate speech without fully understanding their meaning, history or context. They may be imitating others who have used this language, without fully understanding the severity of its impact or the unacceptability of all forms of hate speech. It's important that teachers intervene with an educative response when hate speech is used to enable students to understand the meaning and impact of their language and to support those affected by it. Teachers should also consider using restorative approaches when appropriate to enable students to take responsibility for their actions, to understand their impact and to commit to changing their behaviour. Refer to the coaching point Responding to student use of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech page 61 for further guidance on the use of restorative approaches in the context of hate speech.

Part C: Hate speech hurts

1. Display the ecological model that shows the way that a person is 'nested' within a group, which itself is nested within a broader society.
2. Explain that students will work together to provide examples of some of the ways that hate speech can have harmful effects, at 3 different levels:
   i. hurting the person who it is directed at (for example, through use of racist, misogynistic, homophobic or other derogatory statements, or put-downs)
   ii. hurting those who are part of this person's membership groups or communities (for example, by implying that all people who share certain identity characteristics, like skin colour, gender, sexuality or religion, are also of lesser worth)
   iii. hurting the society that everyone lives within (by contributing further to making it an unfair or unsafe place).
3. Assign small groups to work at a particular level of the social ecology, building examples of negative effects of hate speech that can occur at that level. For example, at the individual level, students may describe effects on emotions, self-esteem and participation. At the group level, students may describe effects like learning that people like them may not be given the same rights or respect as others, and that they are part of a group which experiences discrimination. At the societal level, students may describe effects like unequal access to housing, employment, health and education.



4. Invite groups to report back, building a visual model from their inputs. (You may wish to display the model on the board, use paper to create a large floor map, or use a digital tool to collect the data.)

Examples of negative effects of hate speech

An individual may feel hurt, shame, anger, isolation or fear. This may lead to them experiencing depression or anxiety. They may find it hard to concentrate, feel unsafe and withdraw from participation, or give up things they like doing just to protect themselves.

A group that is the target of hate speech is more likely to face disadvantage, discrimination or unequal treatment at school and work, and in sports, leisure, housing and health care. Members of the group are more likely to experience violence, and are more likely to experience physical and psychological health problems because of disadvantage and discrimination.

The society in which hate speech happens is more likely to have higher rates of conflict and violence, and to blame certain groups for causing their own disadvantage. People in these societies are less likely to feel safe, supported and connected. History shows that hate speech has led to violence, inequality, discrimination, terrorism, war and genocide.

According to UNESCO:

Hate speech not only causes harm at the personal level and can incite violence, it is an attack on inclusion, diversity and human rights. It undermines social cohesion and erodes shared values, setting back peace, stability, sustainable development and the fulfilment of human rights for all.[30]

Coaching point

Inviting student input to strengthen positive peer norms. When students report back on the positive actions they can take in response to hate speech, they strengthen positive peer norms that are implicit in showing disapproval of hate speech (which includes hurtful visual imagery and non-verbal actions). Their contributions can also help to normalise the possibility and acceptability of adopting a proactive approach to show that these actions are not acceptable.

Part D: How to counter hate speech

1. Explain that it is widely recognised that hate speech happens more readily and can travel faster than ever before via social media. It is important therefore to have positive strategies to use if you are targeted or witness others being targeted.

   UNESCO writes on its 'Countering hate speech' page:

> *Hate speech in the form of xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, anti-LGBTIQ+ hatred, misogyny and other types of intolerance is on the rise worldwide, spreading faster and further than ever before through social media. Both online and offline, hate speech targets and dehumanises people and peoples based on who they are – often by actors seeking political gain.[33]*

   If using this quote, provide students with definitions of some of the key terms, including:

   - **xenophobia** – dislike of, or prejudice against people from other countries
   - **antisemitism** – hostility or prejudice towards, or discrimination against, Jewish people
   - **misogyny** – dislike of, contempt for, or prejudice against women.

2. Ask students to work further as a pair or in a small group to share some of the strategies that people can use to counter or minimise the negative impact of hate speech posted on social media.
3. Invite students to report back. Display the 'Ten key actions to counter hate speech' chart and invite students to add to the list of actions or strategies to make the list more comprehensive and reflective of their experiences.
4. Allow time for students to identify some of the barriers that can lessen the likelihood that people will take positive action, and the personal and cultural strengths that people may need to call on to enact these strategies.
5. Invite some students to name and explain their choices. (For example, students may choose to name strengths like sense of justice or fair play, belief in the right to fair and equal treatment, self-awareness, generosity, responsibility, kindness, compassion, courage, loyalty or honesty. They may note the ways positive peer norms can enable them to counter hate speech, and the ways negative peer pressure or fear of being targeted can make it more difficult for people to desist from or challenge this type of behaviour.)

Coaching point: Hate speech builds on discriminatory views and stereotypes. The United Nations suggests that hate speech operates in public rather than private, as it involves connections between the speaker, the target and an audience. This is because the speaker aims not only to attack their target through use of pejorative language or images, but also does so by making reference to one or more identity factors that their target shares with others (for example, their ancestry, ethnicity, 'race', religion, gender identity, sexuality, colour or ability). As a result, hate speech builds on discriminatory stereotypes. The speaker also seeks to influence their audience to agree. That is, the speaker advocates that others (the wider audience) adopt and support their views.
Hate speech is built on a 'them and us' binary. It binds people who perpetrate hate speech together against those they reject. This can lead to normalisation of hate speech among people who group with others to encourage, reward or otherwise join in with this type of abusive behaviour.

Hateful speech can also take place directly from one person to another, without the presence of an audience. However, as hate speech refers to identity characteristics, it is always about others who share the same identity characteristics, as well as the person or person targeted directly.



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 they would prefer a modified way to participate, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for helpseeking.

Review

Review the learning intentions with the class. Ask students to demonstrate their learning by providing some examples of how to recognise hate speech and its effects. Invite students to provide further examples of strategies they can use to avoid the use of hate speech or to counter or challenge it if it occurs.



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 been, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Coaching point: Responding to student use of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. Use of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech call for different responses from a teacher.

If students repeat misinformation (for example, offering misogynistic, racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic or transphobic statements as if they were facts), it is appropriate to name the statement as an opinion, not a fact, and to note that it is an untrue, harmful and discriminatory statement. Use an educative response to correct the misinformation, either at the time, or if more appropriate, by following up after class.

A more concerning situation arises when someone deliberately uses hate speech or re-circulates disinformation, knowing that it is false, and using the statement to hurt, harm or deceive in such a way as to invite discrimination against others. This conduct has no place in a school or elsewhere.

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 does not think it is serious enough to warrant a response, or that they will not defend the right to respect others. Respond to the actions as a form of violence.

Useful strategies commonly used by teachers to respond to other serious behaviours include:

1. Interrupt the student/s to stop the behaviour.
2. Name the behaviour (for example, saying 'That is a racist/homophobic/sexist statement.').
3. State that it is against the school rules and/or against the law (for example, saying '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, saying 'That kind of racist/sexist/homophobic talk has harmful effects. It is not to happen again.').
5. Identify follow-up actions (for example, saying 'I will talk with you further about this after class' or, 'Please sit over here and write an account of what you did, which rule it breaks, and what you will do differently next time.').

Further investigation is required to address serious, repeated or habitual behaviours within the school's broader approach to positive behaviour management. Provide support to those who have been targeted. Investigate whether the behaviour happens elsewhere, and follow up, involving colleagues or senior staff as appropriate. Continue to invest in prevention education, and to strengthen the capacity of students and colleagues to treat others with respect, and to call out negative behaviour. If restorative approaches are used in your school, work with colleagues to plan and facilitate a restorative approach if it is appropriate for those involved to participate.

Restorative approaches require skill and caution in response to hate speech, particularly where there is a power imbalance between the parties, and where there is a possibility that the person who used the violence is without remorse, or may continue to display a prejudicial attitude.[34] If the possibility of re-victimisation is high, more sustained educative approaches may be needed in the lead-up to restorative conversations between the parties.

For more advice on use of strategies to support positive behaviour, see the **student behaviour resources** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy on the Department of Education website.

Ten key actions to counter 'hate speech'
(which includes hurtful non-verbal actions)

Ten key actions			Barriers and drivers that influence action	
Action	How	Strategies	Barriers to action	Personal and cultural strengths that enable action
1. **Recognise what is going on**	Spot it when you see or hear it. Notice when something is a form of hate speech.	'That sounds racist/ homophobic/ transphobic to me.'		
2. **Protect yourself**	If it is directed against you or members of your community, protect yourself. Get somewhere safe and recognise that what they say isn't true.	'That hate is about them, not me. I/we are not what they say about us.'		
3. **Show compassion for the target**	Show that you care when others are targeted.	'That was hurtful, and should not have happened to you. Are you okay?'		
4. **Refuse to join in**	Realise that even when people seem to be joking around, it is still a type of hate speech and hate speech or similar conduct can get worse when people laugh along.	Walk away, get offline, change the topic, or refuse to share it or re-post it.		
5. **Refuse to excuse it**	Using hate speech for entertainment or just because someone is angry doesn't make it okay.	It's not a joke when it's putting someone down. 'I was only joking' is not an excuse, because hate speech affects people whether it's intended as a 'joke' or not.		
6. **Refuse to reward it**	Don't laugh along or share hate speech with others – this just expands its impact.	Don't 'like' it, share it, or laugh along. That just encourages people to do it again and to think it's okay.		

Ten key actions to counter 'hate speech'

(which includes hurtful non-verbal actions)

Ten key actions			Barriers and drivers that influence action	
Action	How	Strategies	Barriers to action	Personal and cultural strengths that enable action
7. **Name it**	Call it out for what it is – name the behaviour as 'hate speech', or as 'racism', 'homophobia', 'misogyny', 'transphobia' and so forth.	'I guess you think that's funny – but actually that's racist.'		
8. **Challenge it**	Show you don't believe it is true.	'What you're saying about people who belong to that group is not true. I know that's not true because …'		
9. **Counter it**	Counter hate speech with positive speech that includes and respects, and by joining support groups or school-based advocacy groups.	'All people are of equal worth. Everyone should be treated with respect for their human rights. I wear this badge because it shows I support the rights of … to respect.'		
10. **Report it**	Reporting hate speech is one way to show respect for people's rights to respect and inclusion. If you report it, it shows you reject it.	'X and Y are making racist jokes when the teachers aren't around.' 'A and B are posting hate speech online about people in our class who are …' 'L and M and their group are saying hateful things about trans students when we are choosing teams.' 'P and Q are making nasty comments about R's religion, and making a Nazi salute sign.'		

Topic 02

Optional activity: Anyone Who Game

Learning intentions

- Use this activity to mix the way people are seated in the circle and to start back after the break with a friendly energiser.

Equipment

- A circle of chairs

Method

1. Seat students on chairs arranged in a circle (remove any spare chairs).
    - The teacher stands in the centre of the circle. They do not have a chair. They call out 'Anyone who … ' and adds some information. (For example, 'Anyone who likes icecream… '). When they call the category, all players of that category must move to a different chair. That is, anyone who likes ice-cream must leave their chair and find a different one. At the same time, the teacher will rush to a chair, and the last person left without a chair will make the next call in the game.
    - The next person will then make a new call. (For example, they might say 'Anyone who came here on a bicycle … '). Then anyone who came on a bicycle must swap to a new seat.
    - 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 noted.
2. Ask students what key messages they see in this game that might be relevant to the lesson. Focus on personal strengths and dealing with differences in opinion.

Key messages could include:

- There are many differences between people in the group.
- Diversity is a strength.
- Different people bring different ideas and strengths.
- We need to respect those who are different as well as those who are similar to us.

Reflecting on everyday practise

- What are the most important strengths for a teacher?
- What strengths can you identify in your students?
- How do you help students to recognise their own strengths in class?

Extension activities for English classes

- Identify where key characters in a text face a moral dilemma. Describe the strengths they used or would have needed to make a choice they would not regret.
- Write a short story where a character faces and deals with an ethical dilemma.
- Write a short story for children where a character faces a challenge and uses at least 3 different personal or cultural strengths to address this challenge.
- Create an advertisement for a particular personal or cultural strength, identifying the multiple ways it can be useful in day-to-day life.
- Map the personal or cultural strengths displayed at various points in a narrative by a selected character. Describe what you saw to be evidence of these strengths. Outline what the use of this strength 'produced' in terms of effects or outcomes.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk with people at home about the strengths they see various members of the family using in different situations. Students could ask a parent or carer about the strengths they think helped them most during their adolescence and early adulthood.



Topic 03 Positive coping

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- analyse personal characteristics and skill sets that contribute to or limit their capacity to cope with change and challenge
- devise coping strategies to use in a range of different situations.

Informed by the evidence base

Resilience research shows that the 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.[35] 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 practise.[36, 37]

Topic 03

Activity 1: Understanding the impact of negative self-talk

Learning intentions

- Students will investigate the concept of negative and pessimistic thinking styles.
- Students will practise techniques for positive self-talk.

Equipment

- 'Six common mind-traps of pessimistic thinking' table

Method

1. Explain that in the next activity, students will focus on the way our thinking patterns and the things we say to ourselves in our heads can affect how well we can respond to the challenges in our lives. It's about getting your brain on your side!

   To set up the vocabulary, write the words 'Optimistic' and 'Pessimistic' on the board. Ask students to explain to a person sitting next to them what they think these words mean, and to give each other some examples of optimistic or pessimistic thinking.

   Collect some responses from students.

   If needed, provide the following definitions and example to supplement student examples.

   Optimistic is being hopeful and confident about the future. This is sometimes described as 'looking on the bright side of things'.

   Pessimistic is tending to see the worst aspect of things or believing that the worst will happen.

   For example, an optimistic person thinks about what can be done or what can go right. The pessimistic person thinks about what can go wrong, and tends to believe it will go wrong.

   The optimistic thinker thinks about everything they have to be grateful for – or what is good in their life. They think about what is realistic, practical or within their power to do when faced by a challenge.

   The pessimistic thinker thinks about everything that is wrong with them or their life or things that they believe will most likely go wrong.

   The optimist thinks the lolly jar is half full and the pessimist thinks it is half empty.

2. Explain that there is now research into the way people think that shows that positive or optimistic thinkers:

   - are better at coping with stress and hard times
   - are more likely to persist in the face of sustained challenge
   - have lower levels of distress in their life, even when bad things happen to them
   - are less likely to get sick
   - live longer
   - are less likely to suffer from depression
   - are less likely to die of a heart attack.

   It's not clear why optimistic thinkers experience these mental and physical health benefits. One theory is that having a positive outlook enables you to cope better with stressful situations, which in turn reduces the harmful health effects of stress on your body and on your mind.

   Regardless of the reasons, we know that optimistic thinking styles are good for us, and this lesson focuses on how to get better at positive or optimistic thinking. (In the Level 7–8 program, students met the concept of self-talk, and were provided with exercises to develop positive self-talk. Refer to this if needed: Topic 3: Activity 1.)

   Explain that psychologists who investigate the thinking patterns of optimistic and pessimistic people have discovered that there are some very common mind-traps that can hook us into pessimistic thinking. If we are aware of these traps, we can learn how to challenge them and construct alternative thinking patterns to help get us out of a 'spiral of negativity'.

   Ask: 'Who can guess what one of these mind-traps might be?' Ask students to pair–share, then suggest answers, recording some key words on the board.

3. Introduce the 'Six common mind-traps of pessimistic thinking'. These include:
   - overreacting
   - exaggerating how bad things are
   - attempting to 'mind-read' – or thinking you know what other people think about you
   - taking things too personally (sometimes we call this 'getting paranoid' or thinking that everyone is against you)
   - not taking enough responsibility for what happens and blaming other people
   - ignoring the positives or the good things that happen.
4. Explain that students will work in pairs or trios, using the 'Six common mind-traps of pessimistic thinking' table to construct some examples for each of these types of thinking and to add ways to contest or argue back against the negative thinking. Provide a worked example, such as the following, to demonstrate.
   - **Overreacting**: 'I gave the wrong answer – so I'm stupid.' Arguing back might sound like: 'I can't get all the right answers – yet – but I'm making progress and I'll stick at it.'
   - **Mind-reading**: 'They all think I'm a snob.' Arguing back might sound like: 'I'm not sure why they're treating me like this. Maybe they're just trying to impress each other by joking around about what I say.'
   - **Taking things too personally:** 'Nobody ever listens to what I have to say.' Arguing back might sound like: 'They aren't listening to me, but maybe that's because they all want their turn to talk.'
   - **Not taking enough responsibility:** 'They should realise I'm only joking when I say that.' Arguing back might sound like: 'Maybe people feel put down when I make those kinds of jokes, so I'd better take into account the effect I'm having on others.'
   - **Ignoring the positives:** 'I totally messed up.' Arguing back might sound like: 'I made a few bad moves, but everything else was okay.'
   - **Exaggerating how bad things are:** 'Everything I put on makes me look bad.' Arguing back might sound like: 'Some things suit me more than others.'
5. Point out that arguing back tends to be specific, whereas negative thinking includes generalisations.
6. Collect some of the groups' responses. Explore by asking students when these types of thinking can happen, therefore adding some context to the thinking.

Review

Ask students to reflect with the person next to them on what they learned. Ask some pairs to share with the class. Ask students to reflect on future situations where they may need to contest or argue back against the negative thinking – for example, after getting a bad grade, missing a goal in a soccer game or experiencing a break-up.

Coaching point

Positive peer modelling. It is important to collect examples of positive self-talk scripts from the class, as students can learn via positive peer modelling, which helps to normalise conversations about stress and coping.

Six common mind-traps of pessimistic thinking

Are you ... overreacting? Losing track of the facts.	
It sounds like this: You pick out one bad thing and assume it gives the whole picture about you. **Arguing back could sound like:** Giving some alternative examples or evidence of when you have managed a challenge.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
I gave the wrong answer – so I'm stupid.	
I missed the catch – so I'm useless.	
No one invited me – because no one likes me.	
Are you ... exaggerating? Blowing the facts out of proportion.	
It sounds like this: You think if you are not perfect then you are a total failure. **Arguing back could sound like:** Making a more realistic and less exaggerated claim.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
I *never* get the right answer.	
I *always* miss the catch.	
I'm a total *loser*.	
Are you ... being a mind reader? Assuming you know the facts when you really have no idea what other people are thinking.	
It sounds like this: You assume you know how people are thinking (without asking them) and that they are thinking bad things about you. **Arguing back could sound like:** Reminding yourself you need to check in with others to find out what they think.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
The teacher thinks I am lazy.	
The coach wants me off the team.	
Nobody likes me.	

Are you ... taking it too personally? Assuming it's all about you.	
It sounds like this: You tell yourself you're totally to blame when things aren't good. **Arguing back could sound like:** Listing some of the other factors that might be causing the situation.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
My parents split up *because of me*.	
It was *my fault* we lost the match.	
The gathering was *boring because I was there*.	
Are you ... not taking enough responsibility? Assuming it's got nothing to do with you.	
It sounds like this: You tell yourself there's nothing you can do – even when this isn't true. **Arguing back could sound like:** Listing practical things you could do, and which things are beyond your control.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
I can't help it.	
It's not up to me.	
I shouldn't have to if I don't feel like it.	
Are you ... ignoring the positives? 'Switching off' the good facts and 'turning up' the bad facts.	
It sounds like this: You tell yourself that the good things don't count but the bad things do. **Arguing back could sound like:** Listing some of the things that aren't a disaster or that are actually okay.	
Mind-trap example	**Arguing back might sound like**
It was only luck that I scored that goal.	
I only got a good mark because the teacher was a soft marker on my paper.	
He only asked me out because everyone else said no.	

Topic 03

Activity 2: Applying techniques for positive self-talk

Learning intentions

- Students will practise positive-thinking techniques.
- Students will develop their ability to contest the pessimistic explanatory style.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Mind-trap' scenarios

Method

1. Explain that in this activity, the class will work in small groups to see if they can spot the kinds of negative thinking that might be affecting a character in a given situation. They will then script some alternative positive self-talk that the character could use.

   Distribute the 'Mind-trap' scenarios to each group. These describe people who are stuck in a situation that is causing them stress. Each group is going to see if they can detect which 'mindtrap' the person might be stuck in, and then give the character advice that could act as a bit of an 'escape hatch' for them. This advice will give them a way to argue against their self-talk, so they can develop a more optimistic explanation to counter the pessimistic one.

   Ask groups to share their findings with another group, then collect some responses for the whole class to hear.

2. Time for a role-play. Ask for three volunteers: one sits in a chair, the other two stand either side of the person sitting. All three face the class.

   One volunteer is to be the character in one of the scenarios (their choice), the second volunteer is to be the 'demon' on one shoulder, giving pessimistic responses, and the third volunteer is to be the 'angel' on the other shoulder, giving positive suggestions. (This person should try to argue back really strongly so that the character gets out of their pessimistic spiral!)

   Ask the first volunteer to read out the scenario, putting it into 'first person' language. The other two volunteers take it in turns to give advice. At the end of the role-play, ask the character which voice (positive or negative) was found to be more persuasive. Why might this be? Choose a different scenario for other students to work through, if desired.

Review

Conclude the activity by reviewing the learning intentions. Ask the class which aspects of the activity helped them to practise positive-thinking techniques. Ask students to consider situations in which they might use the skills they practised today in their lives.

Coaching point

Engaging in positive self-talk. Most people find it easy to engage in negative selftalk; however, it can be harder to identify types of positive self-talk.

Students may benefit from some examples, such as:

- Acknowledge effort over success – 'Even if I don't get the best mark, at least I know I tried hard.'
- Be realistic about how long the challenge will last – 'Even if it's scary to talk in front of the school, it won't last that long, and I can keep control of my nerves.'
- Be practical about what you can do to cope – 'I'm going to stay calm and focused and give this my best effort.'
- Encourage yourself – 'I can stick at this.'
- Remind yourself you have managed similar challenges before – 'I've stuck at things before, so I'm not going to give up this time.'
- Don't make one failure mean failure forever – 'Even though I missed a shot, that does not mean I'm never going to succeed at scoring a goal.'
- Be hopeful about future opportunities – 'The team will be disappointed, but there's another game next week.'
- Challenge mean talk – 'It hurts when people treat me like that, but that behaviour is more about them than me, and I don't have to believe what they say.'
- Value yourself – 'I am who I am. It doesn't make sense to compare myself to others. People should accept me for who I am.'

Mind-trap scenarios

1. Party time?

Jinni's stressed about their upcoming 16th birthday. Jinni's parents want them to have a party, but Jinni's anxious. What if no one comes? What if they come and have a really boring time and then all leave early? What if they bring alcohol and behave badly?

What kind of a mind-trap of negative thinking is Jinni getting into? What sorts of positive or optimistic thoughts could they use to argue back, as an alternative way of looking at this situation?

2. Secrets

Harry's really upset because his friend Bart borrowed his new bike, damaged it, and didn't even apologise. Harry thinks it's not even worth asking him to pay to get it fixed because clearly, Bart doesn't care. Harry plans to hide the damaged bike from his parents, as he thinks they might get angry about him lending it.

What kind of a mind-trap of negative thinking is Harry getting into? What sorts of positive or optimistic thoughts could he use to argue back, as an alternative way of looking at this situation?

3. Tryouts

Jandamarra really wants to get into the middle school soccer team, but if he attends the tryouts and isn't picked, then everyone will know about this failure. Maybe it'll be better not to try out at all.

What kind of a mind-trap of negative thinking is Jandamarra getting into? What sorts of positive or optimistic thoughts could he use to argue back, as an alternative way of looking at this situation?

4. Can't get started (procrastination)

Lia can't get started on her assignment even though it's now due in two days. Lia thinks her ideas aren't good enough, so she plays her favourite computer game instead. When Lia's parents check in about homework, she tells them everything is fine. When Lia's teacher checks on her progress during class, and asks if she wants some help, she pretends her work is at home.

What kind of a mind-trap of negative thinking is Lia getting into? What sorts of positive or optimistic thoughts could she use to argue back, as an alternative way of looking at this situation?

Topic 03

Optional activity: Traffic Lights Game

Learning intentions

- Use this activity to energise the group, to assist people to work cooperatively and to explore the theme of positive and negative thinking.

Method

1. Explain to students that this game will call on them to remember five different formations. Ask three volunteers to come and demonstrate what each of these formations will look like:
   - **'Hospital'** – a group of three people; one person lying on the floor (representing the patient), and one person kneeling at either side (representing doctor and nurse)
   - **'Date'** – a group of two, standing opposite each other with one hand pointing towards their partner, and the other hand on their heart
   - **'Thinking'** – one person standing on one leg with their hands on their head
   - **'Traffic light'** – groups of three people, one behind each other, the front person kneeling, the second crouching just behind them, and the third standing. Each person should open and close their hands on either side of their face to represent flashing traffic lights
   - **'Motorbike'** – groups of two people, one kneeling with their hands in the air and the other standing behind them, holding out their hands as if reaching for the hands of the person in front of them (imitating what it looks like to reach for motorbike handlebars).
2. Explain that when the teacher calls a command, students must make the right-sized group and quickly make the relevant formation. Students who are last to make the formation, miss out on a group, or fail to correctly complete the formation, must go out. The winners are those last left in the game.
3. Ask: 'What can you see in this game that is also relevant to the challenge of catching the way your own negative thoughts can get in your way in life?'

   Key insights might include:

   - We need to be able to notice how some thoughts help us to persist and to take on challenges or adventures, while others stop us from participating in life.
   - Some of our thoughts can put us at risk of doing things that aren't sensible.
   - We need to be aware of others to work with them or to react appropriately.
   - Being excluded from a social interaction is hurtful.

Reflecting on everyday practise

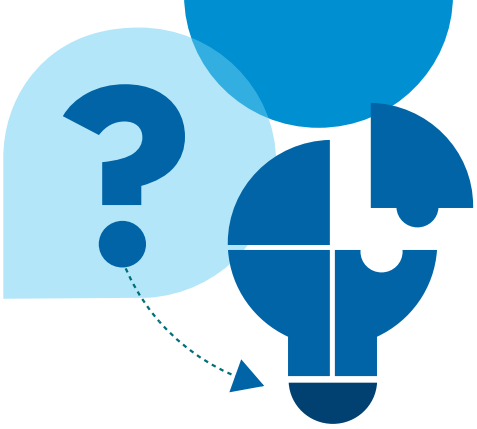
- What strategies do you use to cope when you have had a challenging day? Which of these can you use at school?
- How do you model effective coping and self-regulation for your classes?

Extension activities for English classes

- Select a character from a set text or film study. Write the self-talk argument that a character might have when they are trying to make a difficult decision.
- Examine a challenge faced by a character in one of the set texts. Identify the coping strategies they use. Speculate about what might have happened if this person had used different coping strategies and an alternative 'self-talk' script. Identify some alternative options that this character could have chosen. Write an alternative section of narrative to outline what happened when a character used or responded to a different set of coping strategies or self-talk.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk with family members about their preferred coping strategies. Students could ask a parent or carer what helped them to cope with stress or challenges when they were young.



Topic 04 Problem-solving

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- analyse the personal and social characteristics and skill sets that contribute to or limit positive approaches to problem-solving
- generate, apply and evaluate strategies to prevent and resolve interpersonal problems and conflicts
- evaluate the possible outcomes of decisions and analyse the consequences of decision-making
- generate and evaluate strategies to prevent and resolve interpersonal problems and conflicts.

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 has been identified by the World Health Organization as a key skill for health.[38] To be able to solve problems, children need to be able to think critically and evaluate the consequences of various actions.[5]

Use of problem-solving tools to explore possible responses to challenges provides 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.[39]

Topic 04

Activity 1: Using a logical model for problem-solving

Learning intentions

- Students will learn about and practise using a problem-solving tool to identify options and possible consequences.

Equipment

- 'Solve it! Six steps for problem-solving' guidelines
- 'Problem' scenarios
- Writing materials or digital devices

Method

1. Present the guidelines (summarised below and detailed at the end of this section).

   Solve it! Six steps for problem-solving

   Step 1: Name the problem or challenge.

   Step 2: Brainstorm all the possible actions.

   Step 3: Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each action or option.

   Step 4: Choose an option.

   Step 5: Describe what carrying out this choice might sound like or look like.

   Step 6: Assess if this is a short-term or a long-term solution, and if and when it might need review.

2. Use the 6 steps to provide or co-construct a worked example, using a relevant scenario.

Worked example

Scenario: Alex's friends ask Alex to get their older sibling, who is 18, to buy alcohol for the upcoming party. These friends are really important to Alex but the idea of involving their sibling in something illegal is making them feel anxious.

Step 1. What's the challenge? Alex wants both to please friends, and avoid putting their sibling in a difficult position in relation to the law about buying alcohol for minors. Alex also wants to stand by their own sense of what is right for them in such a situation.

Step 2. Brainstorm possible actions.

Alex could:

a. say 'no' to the friends and tell them the request puts them in a difficult position

b. avoid the friends

c. make a joke about their request

d. suggest an alternative.

Step 3. Explore advantages and disadvantages of each action (scoring each out of 10)

a. It would be honest, and the friends might understand this is unfair pressure.	It might feel uncomfortable.	6/10
b. It would mean the problem might go away.	The friendships might break down.	3/10
c. This would break the tension.	It wouldn't last and the pressure might return.	3/10
d. This would save face.	The friends might reject the alternative and continue to apply pressure.	6/10

Step 4. Choose an option

a. Say no and explain why.

Step 5. What would carrying out this choice sound like or look like?

Alex says: 'I can't put my sibling in that position. It would be difficult for both of us.'

Step 6. Assess if this is a short-term or long-term solution.

Long-term solution – Alex's friends might realise they shouldn't ask them this again.

3. Put students into pairs or groups of three and provide a selection of scenarios (see suggestions below). Students are to use the 6-step model to map an approach to addressing the selected problem.
4. Emphasise the importance of coming up with several possible solutions (Step 2 of the model). Point out that the chosen option does not always have the highest score. Sometimes the 'right' thing is hard to do and scores low, but is chosen because it is the right choice ethically. Refer students to the work on ethical dilemmas to make this point (Topic 2: Activity 2).
5. Invite groups to report back on some responses. Consider: 'Did any groups choose the same problem but favour different solutions?'

Review

Invite students to review the learning intention. Ask a student volunteer to recall the 6 steps of the problem-solving model used in the activity. Ask for some ideas from students about situations that might come up in which the problem-solving model would be useful.

Coaching point

Bystander or upstander? Introduce students to the idea 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 a positive action to assist people who are excluded, hurt or victimised.

As students respond to scenarios, they have the opportunity to consider the 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.

Coaching point

Positive peer leadership. Point out that everyday actions can also be understood as a form of peer leadership. There are times when we see people take these kinds of actions, and even though we have not been the ones to act first, we can lend strength to their leadership by joining in and following the lead that they have set.

Observers can help to make the world a better place when they refuse to join in with or follow a negative leader, instead adding their support to the actions of positive leaders or upstanders. In addition, everyone will experience a time when they are the leader or the first to act. To take this first step can take courage.

For advice on how students can look after their own mental health and wellbeing, support a friend, and get help, see the Department of Education's resource **Students – mental health and wellbeing toolkit | Victorian Government** https://www.vic.gov.au/students-mental-health-toolkit

Solve it! Six steps for problem-solving

1. **Name the challenge:** What exactly is the problem? No blaming, not emotion, just the facts.
2. **Brainstorm ideas:** Write down as many ideas as you can. Get ideas from others. Collect any idea even if you're unsure about it. Collect at least five ideas.
3. **Evaluate them:** Weigh up each idea. Could it work? Will it have positive ('pro') or negative ('con') consequences? Assign a mark out of 10 to each.
4. **Choose one:** Which looks like the best option? (Often the one with the highest score.)
5. **Think through what it would sound like or look like to take this action:** What needs to be done? Who does it? When? How realistic is the solution? Consider, if you carried out this option – might you have any regrets?
6. **Assess it:** Is it likely to be a long-term or a short-term solution? Might the decision need a review or follow up?

Problem scenarios

Responsibilities

Jim wants to stay over at his friend's house for a study session, but his parents want him to babysit for their friends so the adults can go out to dinner together.

Fashion

Minh wants to get a new haircut, but his mother has told him she won't pay for it because the style he wants looks ridiculous and isn't worth the money.

Peer pressure

Isaac's friends have asked him to put in money to buy a bottle of spirits, which an older friend will buy for them. Isaac has money, but he doesn't want to drink at the party, and he doesn't like the way his friends act when they've been drinking.

Cyber-bullying

Jemma's been posting mean comments online about other girls in the class. Mahlee thinks this has got out of hand. It might have started as a joke, but now it's just bullying. Mahlee wants this meanness to stop but she also wants to stay on the right side of Jemma, who's very popular in the class.

Violence

Noah's skateboarding friends push all the younger children out of the bowl when they go down to skate, deliberately running into them to scare them off. Noah's younger sibling skates with the younger group and got a badly sprained wrist as a result of the older kids being aggressive. Noah wants to skate with his friends, but he doesn't like the violence and the unfairness.

Depressed?

Magenta's worried about her older brother, Jed, who left school recently and has been unemployed for 6 months. Jed sleeps all day in his room and at night goes out with friends who drink a lot. Jed hardly speaks to anyone at home – he just watches TV or plays games on his computer. Their mum doesn't notice because she works long hours. They never see their dad. Magenta thinks her brother might be depressed.

Future prospects

Dayo really needs to do well in Maths because they want to take the Maths/Science stream in VCE and get into an engineering degree at university. However, lots of their friends mess around in Maths, giving the teacher a hard time, so the class doesn't get much work done. Dayo can see the teacher is trying, but his friends are not being fair.

Body image

Amanthi's worried about her friend Krissy, who has body image issues. She sometimes sees signs that Krissy has made herself vomit after eating. Amanthi's talked about this with friends, who are also worried, but none of them feel confident about what to do. They suggest that Amanthi should be the one to do something because she's known Krissy and her parents since primary school.

Night shift

Kirrili has a job after school at a fast food store. Employees get their shifts in advance, and get turns on the early and late shift. But Kieran, one of the other workers, is always asking her to swap onto the late shift. This means working from 8pm until midnight, which is really late for school nights, and is affecting her concentration at school. Kieran always has a different excuse, but he's a university student and doesn't have early morning classes.

Socialising

Jarrod is neurodivergent, but his older cousins are not. They're always putting pressure on him to go out and socialise, and to make new friends or start dating. He knows they're trying to be helpful but it makes him feel really stressed. He feels like they don't appreciate him for who he is and what his interests are. He would like them to understand better, but he's not sure how to make this happen.

Topic 04

Activity 2: Making an assertive 'I' statement

Learning intentions

- Students will distinguish between assertive, aggressive and submissive styles of communication.
- Students will construct 'I' statements as a tool for assertive communication.
- Students will practise making 'I' statements in a range of interpersonal contexts.

Equipment

- 'Making an assertive "I" statement' guidelines
- 'Problem' scenarios from Activity 1
- Writing materials or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that solving a problem in theory is one thing, but carrying out the actions we think we should take can be another challenge altogether. We often need to be assertive to clearly and respectfully communicate our needs, opinions, concerns or preferences.
2. Write the words 'aggressive', 'assertive', and 'submissive' on the board. Ask students to supply definitions. (If there is need to review work on these concepts, refer back to Topic 4 in the Level 7–8 materials where there is an activity to introduce assertiveness.)

   Aggressive: A person expresses their feelings and opinions in a punishing, threatening, demanding or hostile manner. The person stands up for their own rights but the other person's rights do not matter. It sounds like: 'This is what I want. What you want is not important!'

   Assertive: A person expresses their feelings, needs, legitimate rights or opinions without being punishing or threatening to others and without infringing upon their rights. It sounds like: 'I respect myself, and I respect you too.'

   Submissive: A person fails to express their feelings, needs, opinions or preferences, or they may be expressed in an indirect manner. It sounds like: 'What you want is important, but I'm not, so don't worry about me.'
3. Assertive statements are useful when there is conflict or a relationship problem to be resolved, or when a person needs to communicate about their wants, needs or preferences. Assertive communication is a respectful way of handling interpersonal conflict. There are techniques that can help us work out how to communicate in an assertive way. This can be done through an 'I' statement that explains quite clearly how we feel about a given situation, along with any request that we have of the other party.

   The following format can be useful:

   When (state the action, or situation),

   I feel (say how you feel about it),

   so (make your request here).

   Provide some worked examples, as shown in the box.

   Worked examples

   - **When** people don't give me a turn to speak, I feel that others think I have nothing to contribute, so can you please give me a turn to give my point of view.
   - **When** I do extra late shifts, I feel really overwhelmed and tired and it affects my school work, so I am sorry I can't swap onto your late shifts anymore.
   - **When** you drive over the speed limit, I feel scared that we might crash, so can you please just stick to the speed limit.

   Write the 'I' statement sentence prompts on the board. Put the class into pairs. Using the 'Problem' scenarios from the last activity, ask students to write an assertive statement that the main character could use to carry out the option that they advised. Note that to tell someone how we feel, we need a good vocabulary of words to describe our emotions. (Refer students to the 'Emotions' checklist from Topic 1: Activity 1.)
4. Ask pairs or groups to prepare a short demonstration role-play where they model what an assertive, aggressive and submissive response to the situation might look like. They should aim to use the 'I' statement model within the assertive response.

Coaching point

Linking assertiveness to respect. Highlight that assertiveness is a healthy way of communicating. It is a way of speaking up for ourselves that is honest and respectful while still considering the rights of the other person. Assertive statements are useful when there is conflict or a relationship problem to be resolved. They are also useful when we want to refuse or withdraw consent, explain our personal boundaries, or make a request.

5. Once students have practised, have the groups perform to the class or to another group. As they observe each other, ask those watching to become coaches to help the players do a good job. Ask:
   - What differences were there between the 3 styles of communication: assertive, aggressive and submissive?
   - What did they do well when modelling the assertive option?
   - What could they have done differently when modelling the assertive option?
   - What strengths might be needed to turn this advice into action, and to use an assertive rather than an aggressive or submissive approach?

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking students to comment on what they have learned. Ask a student to summarise the concept of assertiveness in their own words. Ask which aspect of the learning activity was most useful in helping the class to practise techniques for assertiveness in problem-solving, and to distinguish between assertive, aggressive and submissive approaches.

Coaching point

Using solutions-focused approaches in role-play. Avoid naturalistic re-enactments of violence in classroom role-plays. They can attract laughter or become the most riveting part of the presentation. This can inadvertently work to normalise the violence or to minimise its negative impact.[40, 41] 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 contained in the scenario.

Topic
04

Optional activity: Blindfold Drawing Game

Learning intentions

- Students will practise problem-solving in a playful manner.

Equipment

- Sheets of A4 paper
- Pens

Method

1. Put students into pairs. Each student will need a piece of A4 paper and a pen. One person will draw first.

   Each pair sits back-to-back on the floor. One person draws a simple line drawing. Without showing their partner, the student instructs them how to reproduce the drawing, step by step, onto their own piece of paper.

   For example, 'Place your pencil in the middle of the page. Draw a semicircle to the right. Go down 3 centimetres and draw a horizontal line across to the left-hand side of the page' and so on.

   The aim is to reproduce – without relying on guesses! – the original drawing as closely as possible.
2. Once they have finished, students should compare drawings and discuss the difficulties of the task. What would it take to make the drawing more accurate?

   Students should swap roles so that both students have a turn to draw and to instruct. Was it easier the second time round? Why or why not?
3. Ask: 'What can you see in this game that is also relevant to the challenge of solving problems?'

Reflecting on everyday practise

- How do you resolve problems encountered in the school setting?
- How do you model approaches to problem-solving within your teaching practise?
- How do you model assertiveness in your management of classroom interactions?

Extension activities for English classes

- Write a story about a situation where someone wronged another person, and later regretted it. Script the letter of apology that they decided to write.

  Guidelines for a 'strong' apology include:

  1. Acknowledge specifically what was done.
  2. Describe the hurt, harm, offence or effect of that action on the other person(s).
  3. Say what was originally intended by the action.
  4. Say how you feel now about what happened.
  5. State what your future intention is (offer to fix/pay for damage, promise not to do it again).
  6. Say sorry.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk with parents or carers about whether they had to make any difficult decisions when they were growing up. How did they decide what to do about moving house? Getting married? Finding a job? Helping a friend?



Topic 05 Stress management

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify the range of stressors that can affect wellbeing, learning and participation
- evaluate and refine approaches to stress management in response to challenging situations

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

Stress levels can increase as students progress through secondary school. A 2022 Mission Australia study found that more than 4 in 5 (83.2%) gender-diverse young people saw mental health as a barrier impacting on their achievement of work or study goals, as did almost 3 in 5 young women (57.7%) and 2 in 5 young men (39.1%).[26]

It is important therefore that students develop a robust portfolio of coping strategies to assist them to manage the diverse nature of the challenges they may face in relation to study, work, leisure, relationships and family life. Those who can recognise their personal signs and symptoms of stress, and make use of self-calming strategies, tend to cope better with life's stressors and maintain good mental health and wellbeing.[42]

Topic 05

Activity 1: Understanding stress

Learning intentions

- Students will examine the concept of stress as a response to change or challenge.
- Students will identify common stressors.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Coping strategies' tool
- Writing materials or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that the focus of the next activities will be on how we cope with stress. We all experience stress in our lives. This can be particularly intense for some people and at certain times.

   In the last few lessons we have looked at identifying our emotions – learning how to problemsolve with empathy by considering other people's perspectives. We have looked at how important our character strengths are in helping us deal with life challenges. And we have used some problem-solving techniques to think through the best way to deal with complex relationship problems or decisions. We have also practised ways to deal assertively with problem situations. These situations can be quite stressful, and we all need strategies to help us calm ourselves, and to cope with the effects of longer-lasting stresses or challenges.

2. Ask the class: 'What do you mean when you talk about stress? What are some of the words we use to describe a person who is feeling stressed? For example: "anxious", "nervous", "worried", "uptight".'

   Ask students to write a definition in their notebook: 'Stress is … '

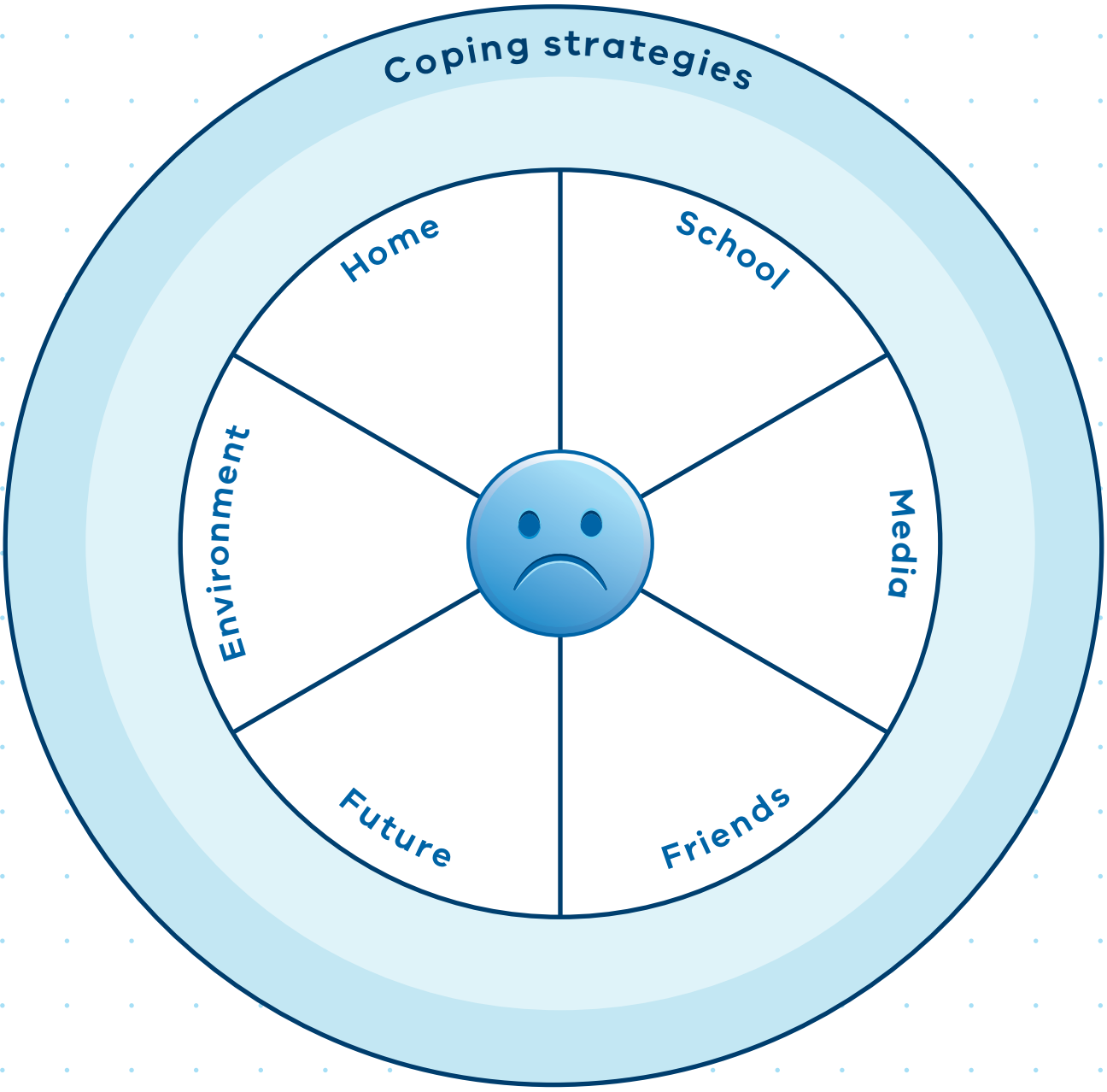
   Sometimes stress is defined as the reaction to challenges or demands in the environment that require physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response. Stressors in the environment can be positive and enjoyable as well as negative, but they may still produce fatigue or use energy. Stress is also a response to our internal environment or self-talk. Stress can be felt in response to threat or danger, exams, public performance or conflict in relationships, and can also be produced by things we say to ourselves. Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, excited, nervous or anxious.

3. What happens in your body when you are stressed? (Release of adrenaline and cortisol into the bloodstream; trigger of the 'flight, fight or freeze' response – increased heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure and metabolism. Glucose is released to provide energy. Blood flow is increased to prepare the body for action. Pupils widen to let in more light, sweat is produced to cool the body.) Write down or draw some of these responses.
4. Ask students to work in small groups to make a list of common stressors for people their age. Use the 'Coping strategies' tool to guide the brainstorming. The tool situates the person in the middle, surrounded by stressors in the 6 domains of home, school, friendships, futures, media and environment.

   Ask students to identify stressors that happen in each of these domains. In the outer circle, they should then brainstorm the various coping strategies that people use to help cope with these stressors.

   Ask groups to report back, taking one of the sections for the report from each group.

Coping strategies
tool



Ask students to consider:

- Which of the stressors have become more intense since they were in Year 7 or 8?
- Which of the stressors do they believe will change in intensity as they reach Years 11 and 12?
- Which of the stressors are 'seasonal' or worse at certain times of the year?

5. (Optional) Homework: Using the 'Six steps for problem-solving' method from Topic 4: Activity 1, make a plan of action to manage one of your stressors.

Review

Ask students to reflect on the learning intentions. Do they consider stress a regular part of their lives that can be positively managed? Do they now recognise ways they already use coping strategies in response to common stressors?

Coaching point

Building a repertoire of coping skills. Point out to students that each of us has a range of different ways to cope, and often we use a different coping strategy according to what the situation is. An important thing to aim for is to have a lot of different coping strategies so that you are not depending on one or two that are not suited to all situations. It is also important to know when to get support or help for yourself or someone else. Relying too much on any one strategy can be harmful, even if it is useful in the short-term or for some types of challenges.

Topic 05

Activity 2: Positive coping

Learning intentions

- Students will identify diverse coping strategies to help deal with life challenges.
- Students will identify coping strategies that may assist with a range of problems and be deployed in a range of settings.
- Students will explore a self-calming meditative technique.

Equipment

- 'Coping portfolio' guide
- 'Coping challenges' list
- Music for guided relaxation or mindfulness
- Writing materials, journals or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that very young children have different kinds of comfort strategies that they like to use to soothe, reassure or calm themselves. They also have favourite games or activities that give them a sense of happiness or fun. Give some examples from your own memories.
2. 'Memory lane:' Ask students to work in a pair or trio. They should think back to what they used to enjoy doing for fun when they were little (such as playing hide and seek), and what they used to do to calm themselves down (such as playing with a favourite toy). Students will exchange memories. Ask some volunteers to share what they heard.
3. Explain that from very early in life, we start developing our own coping strategies. Some are to calm us, some to give us energy or a sense of fun, and some are to distract us when we are scared, tired, jealous or grumpy.

   As we get older, we add new strategies, and our coping style gets more complex and sophisticated. We need coping strategies to help us with the increasingly diverse challenges we face as part of growing up.
4. Display the 'Coping portfolio'. This guide suggests that it's important for everyone to have a diverse range of productive coping strategies to use for diverse challenges and in different settings – for example, at home, at work or at school.

   It can be helpful to have strategies in each of the 5 key categories. A strategy used for one challenge may be ineffective – or even harmful – in the face of a different challenge.

Coping portfolio

- Energetic: exercising, running, walking, sports etc.
- Self-calming: drawing, meditation, reading, listening to music etc.
- Social: talking things over, help-seeking, socialising etc.
- Shift attention: reading, watching TV, playing games, doing a practical task etc.
- Getting organised: making a plan, tidying up, creating a priority list etc.

5. Present the list of 'Coping challenges'. Invite students to add some commonly experienced challenges.

Coping challenges

- Worried about how you look
- Feeling stressed or grumpy
- Feeling bad about yourself
- Worried about how to manage homework or study pressure
- People around you at home are angry, upset or stressed
- Friends are in a bad mood or fighting with each other
- Friends are making mean comments in their social media posts
- Making new friends
- Undertaking work experience

6. Assign students to small groups and ask them to identify at least 5 helpful coping strategies for each of the challenges in the scenarios. They might aim to find at least one strategy from each of the 5 key categories in the 'Coping portfolio' guide.
7. Arrange for students to report back, outlining their selected challenge and their own recommended portfolio of coping strategies.

Coaching point

Coping strategies are learnt via modelling. It is useful to learn about how others cope, as this can help to inform people about additional possibilities.

8. Once students have presented, ask them to note which of the recommended strategies can be used in a school setting. If only a few strategies meet this requirement, challenge them to find additional strategies for use at school. Invite some reflective discussion about the things people can do to help them cope with the learning, social and emotional challenges that can be present at school.
9. Invite students to sample a meditation or mindfulness technique where they will sit quietly with their body relaxed, and focus their concentration on something for a period. By meditating, you rest your body, allow stress hormones to subside and occupy your mind so that unpleasant, stressful thoughts do not intrude.
10. Play some relaxation music quietly in the background. Ask students to sit comfortably in their seats, with their heads down on their desks and eyes closed for a couple of minutes. Explain that you are going to give them some instructions, then the class will need to be silent for a few minutes while the instructions are carried out.

    Once the class is quiet, say: 'You can remain with your head down, or sit up, but keep your eyes closed.' Then use the following script:

- *You are going to focus on your breathing. Breathe in through your nose. Become aware of your breathing.*
- *As you breathe out, think the word 'one' to yourself.*
- *Breathe in … breathe out, 'one'. Breathe in … breathe out.*
- *Think the words 'one, two'. Breathe in … breathe out.*
- *Think the words 'one, two, three'.*
- *Breathe easily and naturally.*
- *Breathe in … breathe out. Think the words 'one, two, three, four'.*
- *Breathe in … breathe out. Think the words 'one, two, three, four, five'.*
- *Now return to a natural rhythm. Just breathe the way your body wants to.*

11. Tell students that when external distractions or distracting thoughts occur, they should refocus on their breath and the counting. Remind them to do this, and keep redirecting their attention back to the breath and the word 'one'. They will also become aware of their rib cages and the way muscles move when they are conscious of them. They can also concentrate on this awareness.
12. If students are still finding concentration difficult, ask them to focus on the inside of their eyelids. Then continue the pattern: 'Breathe in … breathe out, "one" ' and so on.
13. After about 5 minutes, ask the class to slowly sit back up and open their eyes.
14. Ask students to use their notebook or journal to write about the meditation and their experience of it. Invite them to consider mindfulness or meditation as a helpful stressmanagement or self-calming technique.
15. Research or homework activity: Ask students to find some types of music that may be useful for creating a calming mood. Encourage them to report back to the class with examples.

Coaching point

Group cooperation. The relaxation activity requires a high level of group cooperation to work, as all students must be silent during the whole activity.

Meditation is a technique most students really enjoy. Ideally, it is to be practised regularly (sometimes weekly, daily or even twice a day, just for a few minutes).

You may like to choose a different meditation technique. A range of these are available through the Smiling Mind program: https://www.smilingmind.com.au/

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Tell students that the upcoming learning activities in Topic 6 are designed to focus on help-seeking, or what an affected person or concerned peer can do to get help, for potentially serious or persistent problems.

Students will engage with scenarios that address bullying, family violence, financial problems, body image concerns and mental health distress. The focus will not be on discussing personal experiences in class, instead the class will use scenarios as the point of focus, just as in other lessons.

Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment, and by remaining mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues, so it's important to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature. Invite those who wish to check in about a concern to talk with you privately, or with a wellbeing staff member or other trusted adult.

Coaching point

Revisiting class agreements prior to 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 to this resource.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask which aspects of the learning activities were most useful in helping them to investigate, and reflect on the strategies they can use to cope with stressful situations. Ask them to reflect on the calming potential of meditation as a stress management strategy they might adopt as a regular practise.

Topic 05

Optional activity: Pass the Squeezy Game

Learning intentions

- Use this activity to emphasise that people need to stay alert to what is happening around them to be able to adapt.

Equipment

- 6 soft toys or squeezy balls

Method

1. Ask students to form a circle and sit down. Ask them to put their hands behind them. At a signal from the teacher, a soft toy is to be passed from person to person around the circle, in an anticlockwise direction. Do this a few times, getting faster and faster, and adding additional toys.
2. Nominate a student to be a 'switch'. This person can decide whether the toy is to continue in the current direction or be reversed to go the other way! They call 'switch' as they change direction. After a round to demonstrate this, add a second switch, then a third, then finally a fourth.

   Ask students to pass the toys as quickly as they can, with all 'switches' operating. Then stop.
3. Ask students to comment on any aspect of this game that they found to be stressful.

Key messages

- Students need to be able to respond to rapidly changing situations.
- They must stay alert to what is happening around them to be able to give an appropriate response.
- Having to complete a task quickly, or respond to changing instructions, can be stressful.

Reflecting on everyday practise

- What strategies can you use in the workplace to manage your own stress levels?
- Which strategies do you use to help students to self-calm or self-regulate in the classroom?

Extension activities for English classes

- Write about a time when you have taken control when dealing with a stressful or challenging situation. People who can imagine themselves handling their stresses in a positive way, with an image of themselves having some power or control, are better able to bounce back after tough times. Top athletes often use mental images to visualise themselves conquering a challenge. Alternatively, create this as a script for a character in a book or film you have studied.
- Write a story about how a character grappled with a problem, drew on their coping strategies, and eventually surprised themselves or others with what they were capable of doing.
- Look at the protagonist in a text you're studying this year. Identify the stresses they face. What techniques do they use to manage this stress? What other techniques could you suggest? How might this affect the outcome for the protagonist? Write this alternative ending.
- Write a children's story that demonstrates how a key character learns to cope by trying various mismatched coping strategies, before eventually finding a combination that suits them and their challenges.

Talking further

Encourage students to talk to a parent, carer or grandparent about the kinds of stresses they faced when they were at school. Have those stressors changed over time? What do they see as their most effective coping strategies? Can students recognise any others that their parent, carer or grandparent regularly use?



Topic 06 Help-seeking

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- evaluate, re-think and refine approaches to engaging in help-seeking when confronted with difficult situations
- reflect critically on their emotional responses to challenging situations in a range of contexts
- formulate plans for effective communication (verbal, non-verbal, digital) when engaged in peer support, peer referral or help-seeking
- devise and enact strategies for drawing on the skills and support of others to address complex or challenging situations affecting the wellbeing or dignity of themselves or others.

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

Encouraging and fostering help-seeking behaviours is one way to improve mental health and wellbeing.[43] Australian data shows that many young people find life to be stressful and challenging. The young people most likely to be facing psychological distress are those who identify as female, those who identify as non-binary, young people with disability, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people.[44]

Research demonstrates that help-seeking attitudes are influenced by gender norms, with males less likely to indicate that they would seek help than females.[44] Further, those from marginalised communities including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples [45], religious or cultural minorities [46] and LGBTIQ+ people [47] may also be less likely to seek help, particularly if they anticipate that the help services will not understand their cultural needs, belief systems or identities. It is important therefore to normalise help-seeking, and build the skills and knowledge that young people need to seek support when needed.

Research demonstrates that it can be the people who most need help who are least likely to feel that they can enter a help-seeking pathway [48]. If they do seek help, they may be more likely to turn to peers, rather than to formal sources such as doctors, wellbeing leaders or psychologists. It is important therefore to build skills for peer support and peer referral, as well as to normalise helpseeking as a legitimate action.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Advise students that in the upcoming lessons, they will focus on help-seeking. This entails discussing scenarios where peers are concerned about what is happening to a friend or classmate, and where young people are experiencing psychological distress, problems at home or negative treatment from others. There will be a focus on how to seek help and on the different kinds of help sources available in the school and beyond.

Remind students about class ground rules or agreements about respectful behaviour.

Coaching point:

Help-seeking. Those from disadvantaged and marginalised communities experience additional barriers to accessing help services. For example, young people from rural and remote areas commonly have reduced access to help services and can have elevated concerns about confidentiality within their small community. LGBTIQ+ people are more likely to report that it has been challenging for them to access informed and helpful responses from health professionals.[49] In response to structural and cultural barriers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples [45], those from religious and cultural minorities [46] and LGBTIQ+ people [47] are more likely to find that the help services they do access are not sufficiently informed about their cultural needs, belief systems or identities.

Things are least equitable for young people who belong to multiple marginalised groups. For example, a person from a rural area who is gender diverse and experiencing learning difficulties will likely experience an intersection or accumulation of barriers.

Similarly, a person who is young, female, Aboriginal and from a family with low socioeconomic status will likely experience compounding barriers and challenges. The phenomenon by which forms of disadvantage intersect and accumulate is termed 'intersectionality'. It can lead to those who are most disadvantaged being the least likely to receive the support they need, and the least likely to imagine that help-seeking on their part will result in a positive response.

Topic 06

Activity 1: When should we ask for help?

Learning intentions

- Students will identify a range of situations where young people may need to seek assistance from adults or specialist services.
- Students will assess the relative severity of a range of situations and decide whether helpseeking or peer referral is warranted.
- Students will identify formal and informal sources of help, including services available online.

Equipment

- 'Statistics' cards
- 'Should I ask for help?' scenarios
- 'Help sources' tool

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.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Outline that this lesson will focus on help-seeking. Some data and scenarios will focus on serious problems often encountered by young people like them – like bullying, sexual harassment, loneliness, family problems, money problems, mental health issues, eating disorders and more.

   The 'Help sources' tool will provide information about different options for help-seeking available. Students can help each other by providing a friendly and supportive work environment. Remind students to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature and mindful of how their actions may affect other people.

2. Explain that as we go through the ups and downs of life, all of us will need help and support at certain points. One of the decisions that must be made is if, when and from whom we should seek help, and additionally if, when and how we should refer a peer for help. In doing this, it can be helpful for students to know how common it is for people around their age to experience problems relating to mental or social health.

3. Provide the following information for students.

   Research with Australian young people aged 15 to 19 found that over half (53.4%) had already needed support with their mental health at some point in their lives. This was notably higher for gender-diverse young people (77.2%) and young women (61.7%) than for young men (34.8%).

   For those who felt they ever needed mental health support, close to 6 in 10 (58.1%) reported they had sought out mental health support, most commonly from a health professional such as a doctor (68.1%), from family (55.4%) and from friends (46.7%). The young people who had not sought help with their mental health when they felt they needed it said that the main barriers for them were stigma or shame associated with mental illness (43.5%); concerns about confidentiality (43.4%); not knowing where to go for help (34.0%); and cost (24.5%).[26] Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

4. Invite students to respond to this information by naming the key barriers and the key drivers for mental health help-seeking that may affect young people around their age.
5. Explain that they will now look at some more research that shows things like the sorts of issues that cause psychological distress, and how common it is for people to experience mental health distress.

Coaching point

Data literacy. Some classes may benefit from having a student in each group who is confident to read and understand the data. If reading the data is challenging for the class, you can set up a 'data reading panel' comprising yourself and some student volunteers who feel mathematically confident. Invite groups to send a representative out to the panel for a data consultation, to double-check they have understood their data correctly. Encourage a 'growth mindset' by supporting all students to build their confidence to engage with statistical data.

6. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Allocate each group one or more of the 'Statistics' cards. Their job is to read the question on the card to their group. The group members should guess the answer. The reader should then provide the correct answer and use the 'Think about' questions to lead further discussion within their group, before reporting back to the class.

   Ask:

   - What would you need to be able to do to provide good peer support to a friend who was dealing with one of these issues?
   - Where, in this school and outside of school, might students access help from adults to address this problem?
7. Ask all groups to report back to the class. First, they should share their data, and explain what they think this data is telling them. Then they could comment on insights from their conversations.
8. The next step of the activity will ask students to consider and discuss some scenarios. They will rate which of the various scenarios indicate that help-seeking from an adult is needed, and which can be managed with informal peer support.

Coaching point

Acknowledging barriers to help-seeking. Remind students that often barriers to help-seeking can include fear of judgement, rejection or disappointment. In the presence of fear, it takes courage to ask for help. In this case, help-seeking is an act of courage. Courage is a strength (refer back to the 'Strengths' exercises): therefore it takes strength to ask for help. Sometimes we need to call on additional strengths like loyalty, compassion or wisdom to help us activate the courage to seek help.

9. Allocate each group a set of 'Should I ask for help?' scenarios and ask them to choose one to work on first, and to progress through other scenarios at their own speed. For each scenario, they should discuss:

   - Is this a serious situation?
   - Was any of the mental or social health data you considered relevant to this situation?
   - Should the character or characters talk to someone about this? Who?
   - What might happen if nobody takes help-seeking action?
10. Remind students that seeking help, support or advice from other people is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength. It is important to develop help-seeking skills so that in the future, we can ask for help for ourselves or for others. Seeking help when problems arise provides the opportunity for early intervention, which can lessen the likelihood of escalation.

Coaching point

Help students to understand the difference between confidentiality and privacy in relation to help-seeking and disclosure. The term 'confidentiality' signals that information that is disclosed will not be passed on to anyone else. Teachers, wellbeing leaders and other school staff cannot promise to keep information confidential because of their duty of care and other legal obligations. However, they can manage conversations with respect for privacy. Here, the term 'privacy' is used to signal that only those who need to know will be informed, and that information will be passed on in a way that respects the affected parties. For example, it will not be the subject of casual staffroom or classroom conversation and any records will be securely handled.

Young people may be fearful of raising concerns, particularly if family violence or other abuse is occurring. If young people disclose or otherwise seek help, they may request confidentiality. It is helpful to explain the difference between privacy and confidentiality, and to reassure students that their information will be shared only with the

appropriate parties in order to support them and help keep them or their family safe.

Although it is best practise to seek and consider the views and wishes of victim–survivors when sharing their information (if safe, reasonable and appropriate to do so), under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS), consent is never required. Under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS), consent is only required from an adult victim–survivor or third party where no children are involved and there is no serious threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare.

Teachers and wellbeing staff can find further information in the **Schools' Privacy Policy** https://www.vic.gov.au/schools-privacy-policy and in the Department of Education's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL), under **Privacy and information sharing**. Staff can also access further information about the CISS and FVISS via the Policy and Advisory Library https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/information-sharing-schemes/policy

11. Distribute the 'Help sources' tool and consider the information provided about sources of help students might access. Ask students if they know what type of help is available in the school and in their local area.

    (This lesson may provide an opportunity to invite the school counsellor or wellbeing leader to talk to the class, to strengthen awareness of the help sources available in the school.)

12. As a homework or follow-up task, ask students to explore some of the links provided within the 'Help sources' tool and review one of the well-recognised support services available within the school, locally or online. They should then prepare to report back to the class, considering:

    - What kind of issues does the help service address?
    - What might people find useful about this service?
    - How can people engage with this service?



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Advise students that in the upcoming sessions, they will be focusing on what to say when they need help and on exploring help-seeking conversations. Remind students that they can talk to you out of class or approach another teacher or the school wellbeing leader for support. For more private help, they can call one of the helplines referred to in the 'Help sources' list. Students can also help each other by providing a friendly and supportive work environment. Remind them to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature and mindful of how their actions may affect other people.

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 they would prefer a modified way to participate, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour,
or indicated their desire for helpseeking.

Review

In reflecting on the learning intentions, ask students which part of the lesson was most useful for identifying that some problems are serious or challenging enough to involve appropriate adults or service providers as a source of guidance or help. Ask them how the activity was useful in helping them to consider the kinds of issues young people may need support to deal with – whether from peers, relevant adults or help services. Check that students can identify school-based sources of help available to them.

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.



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 been, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Statistics cards

Question: What percentages of young men, women and gender-diverse people aged 15 to 19 said they were 'very' or 'extremely concerned' about **body image**?

Answer: Gender-diverse young people (50.6%) were most likely to be 'very' or 'extremely concerned' about body image, followed by young women (44%). Young men had the lowest rate of this level of concern, at 14.9%.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What percentages of young men, women and gender-diverse people aged 15 to 19 were 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about their **mental health**?

Answer: More than double the proportion of young women reported being 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about their mental health (45.8%) compared with young men (21.5%). Rates of high personal concern about mental health were even more common for genderdiverse people, at 65.9%.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What percentages of young men, women and gender-diverse people aged 15 to 19 said they were 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about school or **study problems**?

Answer: Young women (48.2%) and gender-diverse young people (48.6%) were more likely to say they were 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about school or study problems compared with young men (25.1%).

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What percentages of young men, women and gender-diverse people aged 15 to 19 said they were 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about **mental health as a barrier to achieving study goals**?

Answer: More than 4 in 5 (83.2%) gender-diverse young people saw mental health as a barrier impacting on their achievement of work or study goals. This compares to almost 3 in 5 (57.7%) young women and 2 in 5 (39.1%) young men.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What percentage of young people aged 15 to 19 said they felt **lonely, all or most of the time**? What were the specific rates for young men, women and gender-diverse people?

Answer: Almost a quarter (23.5%) of young people aged 15 to 19 said they felt lonely, most or all of the time. The rates by gender were 44.1% for gender-diverse young people, 25.9% for young women, and 15.7% for young men.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: Is bullying a common experience for young people?

Answer: About 43% of Year 8 students reported they were bullied, either monthly or weekly, during the school year. About 94% of children who used bullying-like behaviours in the past 12 months had also been bullied by others.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022. Australia's children. Canberra AIHW Viewed 29 June 2022.

Question: Are mental health problems common for young people, according to the data?

Answer: Yes. Just over a quarter (26%) of the 16 to 24-year-olds in Australia surveyed had experienced symptoms of a mental disorder in the previous year.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020. Mental health. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 01 November 2021. https://www.aihw.gov.au/mental-health

Question: What were the top 3 issues of concern about Australia as a nation for the young people surveyed?

Answer: In the 2022 survey, the top 3 issues of national concern for Australians aged 15 to 19 were:

1. **Environment:** 51% (compared with 38% in 2021 and 29.8% in 2020). Additionally, 25.5% of young people were personally 'extremely' or 'very' concerned about climate change
2. **Equity and Discrimination:** 35.9%. Additionally, 27.1% of young people said they had been treated unfairly or discriminated against in the past year, most commonly due to gender, race or cultural background, or in relation to their mental health
3. **Mental health:** 33.9%. Additionally, 35% of young people were personally 'extremely' or 'very' concerned about their own mental health.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: What are the top three reasons young people experience discrimination or unfair treatment, according to the data?

Answer: According to the 15 to 19-year-olds surveyed, the top 3 reasons for people being treated unfairly in Australia are gender (38.6%), race or cultural background (31.3%) and mental health (28.9%). Two in five (40.2%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people reported they had been unfairly treated or discriminated against in the past year. Almost half of these young people (48.5%) said race or cultural background was the reason for their unfair treatment. The next most common reasons were mental health (39.2%) and gender (33.2%).

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia.

Question: Do most young people aged 15 to 19 rate their wellbeing as 'excellent' or 'very good', according to the data?

Answer: No. Only 42.1% of young men, 22.8% of young women and 12.5% of gender-diverse young people reported that their wellbeing was 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia

Question: Is it common for young people aged 15 to 19 years to find it hard to turn to their friends or family for help, according to the data?

Answer: Yes. Nearly a third (31.2%) said they find it hard to turn to friends and family if they need help, even though they say that friends, parents or guardians, relatives, family friends and siblings are their most likely sources of help.

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia

Question: Is it common for young people aged 15 to 19 to need support with their mental health at some point in their lives, according to the data?

Answer: Yes. More than half (53.4%) reported needing support with their mental health at some point in their lives. This was notably higher for gender-diverse young people (77.2%) and young women (61.7%) compared with young men (34.8%). The main sources of mental health support used were a health professional (68.1%), family (55.4%) and friends (46.7%).

Source: Leung, S., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Waugh, W., & Christie, R. (2022). Youth Survey Report 2022. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia

Question: Is sexual harassment common in Australia, according to the data?

Answer: Yes: 1 in 2 women and 1 in 4 men experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 years.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia 2018. Cat. no. FDV 2. Canberra: AIHW.

To check for updated statistics, see the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Mission Australia annual reports on youth aged 15 to 19 years.

https://www.abs.gov.au/

https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications

Should I ask for help? scenarios

Scenario 1: Ash has had the same close group of friends since the start of Year 7. The 4 of them always hang out at lunchtime. Over the past week though, Ash's friends have been cutting him out – not waiting at the lockers, or going off with another group and leaving him out. Ash also found out that some kids in the class posted some mean comments about him online and that his own group of friends have also added comments to the post.

- How serious might this be for Ash?
- Should Ash talk to someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 2: Lou was allowed to go to the birthday party of her friend's older brother. One of the older boys was really nice and she danced with him, and later in the evening they kissed a lot. The next morning when Lou checked online, someone had posted a photo of them kissing. She felt distressed that this had happened without her consent, and worried that everyone would be making comments about her.

- How serious might this be for Lou?
- Should Lou talk to someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 3: Cara and Lucien are best friends. They tell each other everything. Recently, Lucien told Cara he is gay and asked her not to tell anyone else because he wasn't ready to come out to his family. He was worried that word would get around quickly in their small town if other people knew, and that his family may be distressed if they found out this way. At first, Cara felt special to be trusted with this knowledge. But later she felt she had to tell someone, so she told another close friend, Simmi. However, Simmi told other people and the story spread, and Lucien got really upset with Cara.

- How serious might this be for Lucien and for Cara?
- Should Lucien or Cara talk to someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 4: Aarzoo's friend Ryan lives on a farm. Even though Ryan is too young to drive on the roads, sometimes when his parents are out, Ryan takes his dad's trail bike and drives around the paddocks at night. Aarzoo sometimes rides behind him. They don't usually go very far, but Ryan has been talking about using the trail bike to drive to a party next weekend, which means going on the roads. Aarzoo thinks this is a bad idea, but doesn't know how to convince Ryan not to do it.

- How serious might this be for Aarzoo?
- Should Aarzoo talk to someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 5: Pei Lin has been on a long diet. She has lots of negative thoughts about her body and she won't wear shorts or bathers. She always seems to be really unhappy. One hot day, all the girls in the group go to a friend's house to swim. Pei Lin feels left out but doesn't want her friends to see her in her bathers.

- How serious might this be for Pei Lin?
- Should Pei Lin talk to someone else about this?
- Should her friends talk to someone about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 6: Aldo has started skipping a lot of school, mostly because he is feeling pretty down. Sometimes he hangs out with older people who have already left school. His friends are worried about him getting involved with this older group.

- Is this serious?
- Should Aldo talk to someone else about this?
- Should his friends talk to someone about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 7: Aiko had unprotected sex with her partner. The sex was consensual, but they did not use a condom. Now she is worried she might have to take a pregnancy test.

- How serious might this be for Aiko?
- Should Aiko talk to someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 8: George has started missing school a lot and is falling behind with his work. He stays home to look after his mum, who is suffering from depression and recovering from a problem relating to alcohol use. George has not told his friends what is wrong with his mum, but they know he has some kind of home duties. His friends notice that the teachers think George is just wagging.

- How serious might this be for George?
- Should George talk to someone else about this?
- Should his friends talk to someone about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 9: Weeks ago, Darcy and Mitch accessed a porn site out of curiosity. Now Darcy brags a lot about all the porn he watches. He sometimes shows porn videos to others, encouraging them to have a laugh about it, while making sure teachers don't see he has his phone out at school. Mitch and some other people in the class are worried that Darcy is taking things too far, but don't want to get anyone into trouble by telling their parents or teachers what's happening.

- How serious might this be for Darcy?
- Should Mitch talk to someone else about this?
- Should Darcy and Mitch's friends talk to someone about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 10: Nadia's boyfriend asked her to exchange nudes with him, but after she sent her image, she heard nothing more. The next day, some students were sniggering and laughing as she went to her locker. Some girlfriends told Nadia her image had been shown to others. Nadia felt really embarrassed and decided to skip school for the rest of the day.

- How serious might this be for Nadia?
- Should Nadia talk to someone else about this?
- Should her friends talk to someone about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 11: Paula's group of friends have started hanging out at the far edge of the oval. This hasn't been great for Paula because she can't get her wheelchair down there without a struggle. She likes to be independent, and doesn't want to ask friends to help her get around. Since she stopped going down there with them, they've started leaving her out of their plans for the weekends, and choosing places to go that don't have wheelchair access. When they were younger, they always made an effort to make plans that also worked for her. Now she is feeling really left out and de-valued.

- How serious might this be for Paula?
- Should Paula talk to someone else about this?
- Should her friends talk to her or someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

Scenario 12: Arkana wanted to break up with her girlfriend Beth. The relationship wasn't working the way it used to, and now they always seem to be arguing or upsetting each other over silly little things. However, she was worried that if she did break things off, Beth would be in a really bad way. Beth's family had been through a lot, first with her grandmother dying and then her little brother being diagnosed with leukaemia.

- How serious might this be for Arkana and for Beth?
- Should she talk to someone else about this?
- Should her friends talk with her or someone else about this? Who?
- What might happen if nobody takes action?

‘Help-sources’ tool: Where can I go if I need support?

Trusted parents, carers or adults

Trusted parents, carers or adults are often in the best position to identify if you are struggling and need support. Even if they can’t solve your issues, they can find experts who can help. You can tell a trusted person if privacy is important to you – for example, if you don’t want other people or family members to know what you have discussed. There may be times they need to tell others to help keep you safe, to get additional advice or to work out with you what might be a good way forward.

Friends

Friends often turn to each other for help before seeking out an adult, an expert (like a psychologist) or a service (like Headspace). Friends can offer support, like letting you know they care, doing things you enjoy together, letting you know that help is available or sharing their own challenges with you. Your friend might feel worried about you and think that it’s important that you speak to a trusted adult. Their encouragement to seek additional help can also be a great support if you decide to reach out for professional or specialised help.

Teachers

A teacher you trust can play an important role in guiding you to get the help you need. They might ask you some questions to better understand what you might need help with. Some kinds of help they can provide directly, like encouraging you, helping you stay connected to learning and to school, and applying special consideration in response to the way your challenges are affecting you. Where possible, they will respect your privacy; however, teachers may be required to share information with others if they believe a student is at risk of harm.

School mental health practitioner, counsellor or wellbeing leader

Your school may have a mental health practitioner, counsellor, chaplain or wellbeing staff member available for you to speak to. In most schools, you can make an appointment to see someone by just dropping in or emailing. If you’re not sure who to talk to or how to approach the wellbeing team, ask another trusted adult in the school, like your favourite teacher or year-level coordinator. A parent, carer or friend may also help you to start this form of help-seeking.

The school wellbeing team will listen to what’s going on, make sure you’re safe, and help you to make a plan to feel better and take some first steps. They can offer short-term counselling and connect you with community services or programs that can help. They can also talk with your parents or carers on your behalf if you need them to. They can let your teachers know you’re going through a tough time and what would help you in class (if you want them to know). They can also direct you to more intensive support if you need it and may be able to help find sources of financial assistance.

The services provided by your school’s wellbeing team are free. The wellbeing team will answer any questions you have about when information may be shared with others – for example, if you or someone else is at risk of harm. If you would like more information about privacy, you can read the **Schools’ Privacy Policy** https://www.vic.gov.au/schools-privacy-policy.

‘Help-sources’ tool: Where can I go if I need support?

Psychologist

Psychologists are mental health professionals who can help people with issues like depression, anxiety, eating disorders or stressful life events. Psychologists understand how your brain works and use different types of therapy to help you develop better ways of thinking and behaving. Some schools have a psychologist on staff. A local doctor can provide you with a Mental Health Treatment Plan and refer you to a psychologist.

Doctor (GP)

A doctor (GP) can talk to you about your mental health, help you develop a mental health care plan and refer you to an expert like a psychologist or psychiatrist. You might have a GP at school or a family doctor in your community. The Doctors in Secondary Schools program provides no-cost, confidential medical services to students. It doesn’t matter who you see, as long as you feel comfortable and supported by them.

There are no laws that stop you from seeing the doctor without your parents or guardians. However, if you plan to go alone, you should contact the doctors’ office beforehand to confirm you want the appointment to be kept private. The doctor will answer any questions you have about when your information may be shared with others – for example, if you or someone else is at risk of harm.

Look for a bulk-billing clinic to access this support for free if you have a Medicare card, concession card or health care card. You can get your own Medicare card and number if you’re 15 or older and enrolled in Medicare. As a student, you can also ask for bulk-billing when you seek an appointment, and it’s okay to ask questions about how much a service might cost. If you are unable to get a Medicare card, you can visit a community health service for assistance.

Helplines

Headspace

Call: 1800 650 890

Visit: headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/

Headspace (available on-call from 9 am to 1 am Victorian time, 7 days a week) supports young people with mental health and physical health (including sexual health) services, with alcohol and other drugs services, and with work and study support. They work with young people to help get them back on track and strengthen their ability to manage their mental health in the future. Headspace also offer a ‘Strengths in my roots’ platform that provides mental health information and resources for multicultural young people.

If an interpreter is needed to help speak with any of the help services, the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) is available on 131 450, or visit tisnational.gov.au

Calls to Headspace are free from a landline, payphone and most mobile phones.

Kids Helpline

Call: 1800 55 1800

Visit: kidshelpline.com.au

Email: counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au

Kids Helpline operates 24/7 and you can call anytime, for any reason, for free (even from a mobile) to speak to a qualified counsellor. Kids Helpline supports young people up to 25 years of age.

Helplines

Beyond Blue

Call: 1300 224 636

Visit: beyondblue.org.au

Beyond Blue (available 24/7) provides information and support for anxiety, depression and suicide prevention for everyone in Australia. You can call or chat online 24/7 with a mental health professional.

Calls are charged at the cost of a local call from landlines or public telephones, but may cost more from mobile phones. Online services including email and chat are free.

Lifeline

Call: 13 11 14

Text: 0477 13 11 14

Visit: lifeline.org.au

Lifeline (available 24/7) provides people experiencing emotional distress, having a difficult time or worrying about someone else with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Calls to Lifeline are free from mobile phones, and landline calls are usually charged at the cost of a local call. Additional charges may apply for some home phone plans.

1800RESPECT

Call: 1800 737 732

Visit: 1800respect.org.au

1800RESPECT (available 24/7) is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service. They can be contacted by phone or online chat, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When you make contact, you will talk to a trained counsellor who will listen and support you in what feels right for you and your situation. 1800RESPECT provides services for everyone, including people who require an interpreter or people with disability.

It's free to call from a landline, payphone and most mobile phones. However, some mobile phone companies do charge for these calls.

Sexual Assault Services Victoria – Sexual Assault Crisis Line

Call: 1800 806 292

Visit: sasvic.org.au

The Sexual Assault Crisis Line (available from 5 pm to 9 am weeknights and throughout weekends and public holidays) provides crisis counselling for victims of sexual assault.

Sexual Assault Services Victoria can also help someone decide what to do and work with them to help them recover from the effects of sexual assault (there are locations spread around Victoria; each has a separate contact number). Visit sasvic.org.au to locate the nearest centre.

QLife Victoria

Call: 1800 184 527

Visit: switchboard.org.au

QLife (available 3pm to midnight, 7 days a week) provides peer-based, volunteer-run telephone and online chat support to LGBTIQA+ people of all ages. QLife is a free service, but you'll need to check with your specific mobile provider to confirm there are no call charges. QLife also offer a free webchat, which uses a small amount of data if not connected to wi-fi.

Helplines

Rainbow Door

Call: 1800 729 367

Text: 0480 017 246

Visit: rainbowdoor.org.au

Rainbow Door (available 10am to 5pm every day) is a free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their friends and family.

Djirra

Call: 1800 105 303

Visit: djirra.org.au

Djirra is an Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service supporting Aboriginal people (of all genders) who are experiencing or have experienced family violence. They're available 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. Djirra also assists non-Aboriginal people experiencing family violence who are parents of Aboriginal children. Calls to Djirra are free.

Yarning SafeNStrong

Call: 1800 959 563

Email: ysns@vahs.org.au

Facebook: @YarningSafenStrong

Yarning SafeNStrong (YSNS) (available 24/7) is a free and confidential counselling service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It's available to people and families who need to have a yarn with someone about their wellbeing. They have culturally suitable counsellors who can yarn safely and 'who get it', no matter how big or small the challenge. They offer support with social and emotional wellbeing, financial wellbeing, medical support and drug and alcohol counselling and rehab services.

All times mentioned above are based on Victorian standard times (Australian Eastern Standard Time and Australian Eastern Daylight Time).

You can find more support and information about mental health in the **Students – mental health and wellbeing toolkit**: https://www.vic.gov.au/students-mental-health-toolkit

LGBTIQA+ students can find more support on the LGBTIQA+ Student Support site: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/resources

Topic 06

Activity 2: Conducting the help-seeking conversation

Learning intentions

- Students will identify appropriate sources of help, support or advice.
- Students will practise seeking help, support or advice for themselves and others.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Should I ask for help?' scenarios (from Activity 1)

Coaching point

Why use role-play? Role-play activities help students practise being in situations where they may need to help-seek. It can be easy to think of good advice, but much more challenging to put it into action. Engaging in role-play offers a rehearsal for life. Seek or build strong examples to help create this sense of possibility. Watching others role-play provides a modelling of these vital skills and can also help to normalise the act of help-seeking.

If role-playing is difficult for the class, another option is to have some student volunteers demonstrate a role-play, or to arrange for students to work in pairs to co-construct help-seeking scripts – even framing what could be said will provide a level of modelling.

If the class members are shy about showing their role-plays, work up to it by arranging for half the class to play their scene at once for a minute, while the others observe multiple channels at once. Then swap while the other half has a turn. Repeat, but with 2 or 3 'channels', then eventually work up to taking short looks at individual scenes.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Outline that this lesson will take a proactive approach to help-seeking. Some data and scenarios will focus on serious problems often encountered by young people, like bullying, sexual harassment, loneliness, mental health issues and more. A 'Help sources' tool will provide information about different options for help-seeking that are available. Remind students that they can help each other by providing a friendly and supportive work environment. Also remind students to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature and mindful of how their actions may affect other people.
2. Acknowledge that sometimes people can feel reluctant to ask for help for themselves because they are embarrassed, or because they have had previous disappointing experiences with help-seeking. In these situations, it can be useful if a friend provides some support or encouragement to assist them to do this. Explain that when we are help-seeking for ourselves or on behalf of others, it is important to be 'assertive'. Refer back to the activity on 'Assertive "I" statements' (see Topic 4: Activity 2). We can use assertive 'I' statements when help-seeking.
3. Ask each pair or group to select one of the 'Should I ask for help?' scenarios from the previous activity, or to make their own scenario.

   To prepare for the help-seeking role-play, ask students to identify the 'who', 'where', 'when' and 'what' of their scene. They may either play the scene as someone seeking help on their own behalf, or as someone seeking help with or on behalf of a peer.

   Write the following guidelines on the board.

- Who = Who is in the scene? (for example, two friends and the year-level coordinator)
- Where = Where will the scene take place? (for example, in the coordinator's office)
- When = When will the scene take place? (for example, at lunchtime)
- What = What will the scene be about? (for example, telling the coordinator that they are worried about their friend)
- How = How will the character play the scene? (for example, approaching the coordinator and requesting advice)

   Once students have decided on the basics for their role-play, they should try it out. Give groups a few minutes to practise their role-plays.

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. 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 appropriate and respectful. Make sure that you and your 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.

4. To reflect on the experience, ask about the help-seeking encounter:

- What thoughts or feelings do you think the character would have about asking for help?
- Given these concerns, what do you think it would take to initiate a help-seeking conversation of this nature?
- Which character strengths would you say someone needs to call on to initiate a helpseeking conversation? (For example, courage, persistence, hope or optimism, or loyalty.)

5. For further work on the scenarios, ask some pairs to show their role-play in front of the group.

   Ask volunteers to be the 'hidden thoughts' for each of the main characters. Ask them the following questions, seeking multiple answers each time. Others watching may also add to the answers:

   - What might this person be thinking or feeling, but not saying out loud?
   - What might they be afraid of?
   - What might they be hoping for?
   - What do you think they need at this time?

6. Ask students to talk in pairs to think of some advice to give to the help-seeking character. Collect the advice.

7. Return to the role-play to experiment with putting some of the advice into action. Use new volunteers to show the advice in action, or ask the original actors to show how this new advice would look.

   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 they would prefer a modified way to participate, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for support.

Review

Invite students to reflect on the learning intentions. Ask which aspects of the learning activity helped them to enhance their capacity to seek help or to understand how to respond in a helpful way if a peer needs support to engage in help-seeking. Re-iterate the key messages about the importance of peer support, peer referral and help-seeking, and the importance of providing a supportive environment for all classmates.



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 been, or is at risk of being abused. Further information can be found in the introduction pages 16-17.

Topic 06

Optional activity: Back-to-back Game

Learning intentions

- Students will explore the strengths of working with others to solve a problem or reach a solution.

Method

1. Divide the class into pairs. Ask pairs to stand back-to-back, leaning against each other's back. Without separating, they must sit. Once sitting, they must move to a standing position again.
2. Place 6 chairs in various spots around the room. The pairs must try to move around the room, changing direction and moving around this obstacle course without coming apart – the backs must stay in full contact.

   Don't give any other instructions. Those who develop good communication and collaborative problem-solving skills will be able to do this quickly. They may communicate or develop a technique, like walking sideways.

   Provide alternative roles for those who prefer not to join in games that involve body contact, or for those whose bodies cannot play this game. Roles like 'sports commentator', 'reporter', 'occupational health and safety officer' and 'cheer squad' can provide a way for observers to share insights and provide peer support.
3. At the end of the game, ask the group to watch one or two pairs who have developed good skills. Ask this group to explain what helped them to do this well. Ask the class, 'Where do we need these cooperative skills in everyday life?'

   Key message:

   We need to cooperate and communicate to solve a problem.

Reflecting on everyday practise

- What are some sources of help you can draw on to support your professional role?
- How do you encourage and model help-seeking behaviour for your students?
- How do you respond to attempts by your students to seek help from you?

Extension activities for English classes

- Conduct a debate on the topic 'Help-seeking requires greater courage than going it alone'.
- Discuss the attitudes towards help-seeking evident in characters in a set text.
- Write a story about a turning point in someone's life that occurred as a result of them either seeking help, or as a result of letting another person contribute or support them.
- Write a children's story about a character who overcame adversity as a result of persisting with help-seeking, even when at first their approach was unsuccessful.

Talking further

Encourage students to talk with parents or carers about:

- who they could call on if something ever goes wrong when out with friends
- trusted adults who could be contacted for help if parents or carers could not be reached
- key steps within a family emergency plan if someone becomes seriously ill or is severely injured in the home.

Encourage students to talk with parents or carers about who they turned to for help at different stages in their life.

Social and emotional learning as the entry platform for positive gender relationships education

The social and emotional skills developed through activities in Topics 1 to 6 provide a logical 'springboard' to engage in more explicit work with students around gender norms, gender identity and respectful relationships.

The learning materials for other levels include an additional 2 topics – Topic 7: Gender and identity and Topic 8: Positive gender relationships. In place of these topics at Level 9–10, teachers are directed to the Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping out against gender-based violence resource. This program provides teaching and learning activities around the key themes of gender, power, violence and respect. Differentiated learning materials are provided for Levels 8, 9 and 10, as well as advice around a whole-school approach to violence prevention. The materials can be downloaded here: ADD LINK

Where teachers need to differentiate learning activities provided to suit diverse needs of students, they are also encouraged to consider delivering materials from lower and higher levels of the *Resilience, rights and respectful relationships* materials.

All materials can be viewed and downloaded here: arc.educationapps.vic.gov.au/learning/resource/2JZX4R?fuse=1

Cross-referencing to Catching On

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 9-10								
	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: Understanding complex emotions	●							
Activity 2: Thinking from different perspectives	●							
TOPIC 2: Personal and cultural strengths								
Activity 1: Valuing character strengths	●	●						
Activity 2: Using strengths in ethical dilemmas	●	●	●		●	●		
Activity 3: Growing respect, learning from Aboriginal culture	●	●	●					
Activity 4: Recognising and challenging hate speech	●	●	●		●			●
TOPIC 3: Positive coping								
Activity 1: Understanding the impact of negative selftalk	●							
Activity 2: Applying techniques for positive selftalk	●							

Cross-referencing to Catching On

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 9-10								
	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 4: Problem-solving								
Activity 1: Using a logical model for problemsolving	●	●	●		●			
Activity 2: Making an assertive 'I' statement	●	●	●					
TOPIC 5: Stress management								
Activity 1: Understanding stress	●							
Activity 2: Positive coping	●							
TOPIC 6: Help-seeking								
Activity 1: When should we ask for help?	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Activity 2: Conducting the helpseeking conversation	●	●	●		●	●	●	●

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