Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships

Teaching for social and emotional learning and respectful relationships



VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

Level 11–12 Learning Materials

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The authors of the resource are:

- Topics 1–6: Helen Cahill, Ruth Forster, Anne Farrelly, Kylie Smith, Sally Beadle, Ros Pretlove and Jessica Macrae
- Topics 7–8: Helen Cahill, Sally Beadle, Leanne Higham, Catherine Meakin, Anne Farrelly, Jessica Crofts, Kylie Smith, Ros Pretlove and Jessica Macrae.

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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: Strengths, challenges and study skills	Students use their personal and cultural strengths to foster positive and respectful relationships with their peers. They engage with a range of goal setting and time management strategies to develop their capacity to deal with academic pressures, challenges and opportunities.
Topic 2: Stress and coping	Students identify common stressors that young people may encounter including those related to study, peer relationships, employment and home life. They continue to develop their use of positive coping strategies, consider how to support friends who are stressed.
Topic 3: Safer socialising	Students develop active listening skills for peer support and rehearse strategies for supportive conversations. They develop skills in assertive communication to express their needs, feelings or opinions, and engage with problem-solving tools that enable respectful modes of conflict resolution.
Topic 4: Understanding gender, identity and respect	Students build their awareness of the way gender norms and stereotypes can influence attitudes, practises and behaviour and identify patterns of gender-based discrimination. They explore the ways that gender norms can influence intimate relationships and communication about consent and develop strategies for respectful conversations.
Topic 5: Positive gender relations	Students learn about the patterns and prevalence of gender-based violence and explore the influence that gender norms can have on gender-based violence within sexual and romantic relationships. They learn about the law on consent and develop strategies to communicate giving, denying and withdrawing of consent.
Topic 6: Help-seeking and peer referral in response to gender-based violence	Students develop strategies that can be used to communicate boundaries, seek safety and access support. They engage critically with how alcohol use can intersect with negative gender norms to endorse, contribute to or excuse forms of gender-based violence. They identify where to get help, support or advice in response to situations involving gender-based violence.

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 11-12 Resource

Introductory activities

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 which 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]

Learning intentions

- Students will work collaboratively in mixed groups and get to know each other.
- Students will co-create ground rules to support participation, inclusion and respect.

Equipment

- Room to move
- A soft toy or ball

Method

Part A: Names

1. Seat students on chairs arranged in a circle. Explain that this game will help people to learn names in a playful way.
2. Go around the circle and ask everyone to say their name.
3. On second rotation around the circle, ask the first student to say their name and add the name of a city that starts with the same letter (for example, Uriah from Ulaanbaatar, Jamila from Jakarta).
4. The next student in the circle repeats the name and city of the first student and adds their own name and city.

   This continues until everyone in the circle has named themselves and a city, finishing with the first person reciting the entire circle's names and cities.

   Encourage students to help each other if they can't remember a name or a city.

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.
2. Still seated on chairs arranged in a circle, name each student as a number between 1 to 5. Ask them to remember their number. Point out that they all belong to the category 'numbers'.
3. The teacher stands in the centre of the circle. They do not have a chair. When they call out a number between 1 and 5, or 'odds', or 'evens', students of that category must move to a different chair (for example, on the call of '1', all '1s' must leave their chairs and find a different chair). On the call of odds, all 1s, 3s and 5s must leave their chairs and find a different chair). At this 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.

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

   Play a few rounds of this game. By this time, students will be seated in a mixed arrangement.
4. Stop the game and point out that we all share the category 'people' just as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and odds and evens share the category 'numbers'. In social and emotional learning and gender literacy activities, all people are included and respected, regardless of any differences between them.

Coaching point:
Learning names. Although most students may have been at their school for several years, they will not necessarily know all the members of their class well. Starting off with name or mixing games can set the scene for cooperative learning and show students that everyone is important and valued.

Part C: Co-creating agreements

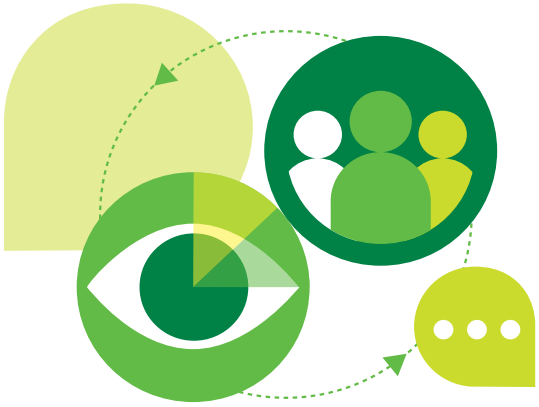
1. Invite students to co-create the agreements they will need for everyone to feel included, respected and enabled when working on issues that are relevant to their study, relationships and physical, social and emotional wellbeing. Ask them to frame agreements in the positive, rather than the negative. For example: 'Listen well to others', rather than 'Don't interrupt'; 'Respect people's privacy', rather than 'Don't tell stories about other people'; or 'Respect differences in points of view', rather than 'Don't put people down when you disagree with them'.
2. Ask for a volunteer to propose the first agreement. Throw the ball or soft toy to them. Invite them to throw the ball to a peer, and then invite them to add. 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. Keep a copy for display.

Coaching point:
Developing a safe social space. This introductory lesson provides a range of activities which 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 the social wellbeing of everyone. It is important for the group to design and implement a range of appropriate classroom rules, including 'no put-downs', with a particular focus on rules that protect respectful relationships between genders. Your classroom or school may already have rules like this in place as part of their approach to school-wide positive behaviour. Ensure these agreements are in place for every class and act when they are not upheld. Naming disrespectful language or behaviour can draw attention to practises that may have become normalised in a classroom. Ignoring disrespectful behaviour can be interpreted as condoning it.

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

Optional game

The Winking Game works well to mix people. See the Games Collection on pages 144 to 147 for additional name games and mixing games.



Topic 01 Strengths, challenges and study skills

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- make effective use of their personal and cultural strengths when responding to the challenges and opportunities experienced in their senior secondary years
- understand the importance of aligning objectives and strategies to accomplish their academic goals
- develop a robust set of strategies that will assist students to manage the challenges that they may experience during their final years of school.

Informed by the evidence base

In the final years of school students can find it difficult to manage the competing demands related to study, relationships, fitness, leisure, family and part-time work. Research with Australian young people aged 15 to 19 years 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%). The study also found that over 4 in 5 (83.2%) gender-diverse young people saw mental health as a barrier impacting on their achievement of work/study goals, as did 3 in 5 (57.7%) young women and 2 in 5 (39.1%) young men. [4] The activities in this topic help students to engage with a strengths-based approach to dealing with social and mental health and managing challenges related to study. Studies investigating the effectiveness of social and emotional learning programs and respectful relationships education find that effective approaches are sustained, relevant, comprehensive, theoretically informed and use collaborative teaching methods to advance critical thinking and social skills, rather than didactic or moralistic approaches. When taught with fidelity they lead to improved mental and social health and reductions in bullying, violence and sexual harassment as well as improved academic outcomes. [5-8]

Topic 01

Activity 1: Emotional landscape in the senior high school years

Learning intentions

- Students will identify a range of potential sources of help, support or advice.
- Students will identify the types of situations that can be challenging or stressful in their final years of school.
- Students will highlight the personal and/or cultural strengths that they may need to call on to address the challenges they encounter.
- Students will identify the personal and cultural strengths that may contribute to growth of positive and respectful relationships.

Coaching point:
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.

Equipment

- Notebooks and pens or digital devices

Method

Part A: Identifying challenges and opportunities

1. Explain that the first activity will focus on identifying the positives and the challenges that students anticipate they might experience across the final years of high school. Put students into groups of 3 or 4 and ask each group to brainstorm 10 positives about being in the final years of school and 10 things that senior students may find stressful or challenging.

   Items on the positive list might include independence, choice of subjects, being old enough to learn to drive, free/private study periods, making new relationships.

   Ideas for the challenges list might include study, time management, exams, body image issues, intimate relationships, pressure to succeed.

2. Ask them to review their list and brainstorm in response to the following questions:
   - what kind of personal and/or cultural strengths might senior students need to call onto respond effectively to these challenges?
   - where in their lives might they see these strengths role-modelled?

   Ask groups to report back on the positives and challenges. Then invite them to share the strengths they thought people might need to draw on to respond to these challenges and opportunities.

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.

Part B: Focusing on positive qualities

1. Explain that the next activity will focus on the positive qualities we admire in others and value in ourselves. We all have strengths, and we use them every day, though often no one names them for us, and so we may not notice that we have them. However, our personal and cultural character strengths are an important part of who we are, and we use them to help us deal with everyday life.

   Character strengths are positive qualities valued by people around the world. We use our character strengths to act in a way that is consistent with our deeper values and virtues. We tend to learn these values and virtues from our families, carers and community and the modelling we experience in our schools. Some examples of character strengths include bravery, honesty, persistence, creativity, generosity, kindness, forgiveness, love of learning, fairness and open-mindedness.

2. Ask small groups to brainstorm strengths to help us thrive in Year 11 and 12. Strengths can be any positive adjectives used to describe

people (for example, hardworking, intelligent, diligent, reliable, creative, responsible, generous, friendly and so on). Ask each group to aim for at least 20, setting a time limit for this task.

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 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 curriculum of the school. 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, oppression or war? (possible suggestions: courage, determination, forgiveness, fortitude, resourcefulness)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to take the risk of migrating to another country? (possible 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? (possible suggestions: creativity, determination, love of learning)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to preserve traditional knowledges about how to care for people and for Country? (possible suggestions: generosity, kindness, courage, wisdom, determination, resourcefulness, commitment, loyalty)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to start to repair past injustices? (possible suggestions: forgiveness, honesty, courage, generosity)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to raise a family? (possible suggestions: love, care, generosity, flexibility, commitment, patience)
- What kinds of strengths might people have called on to live in accordance with their values or beliefs? (possible suggestions: self-control, determination, generosity, loyalty, integrity)

3. Ask students to look at their list and select the 5 strengths they think may help them cope with the study demands of Year 11 and 12, and the 5 that might be most useful in contributing to caring and respectful relationships with others.

   Invite students to share their selections with their group by nominating situations where they could use these strengths.

4. Ask students to report back on the key choices in their group.

Review

Invite the class to review the learning intentions. Ask students to reflect on what they learned. in identifying the key skills and personal strengths that may be useful in their senior secondary school years.

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 students. It's recommended that teachers familiarise themselves with the Department of Education's guidance on implementing Child Safe Standard 1, which is to 'Establish 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 and addressing any instances of racism within the classroom directly and with appropriate consequences.

Topic 01

Activity 2: Setting personal goals and objectives

Learning intentions

- Students will learn how to set personal goals and objectives.
- Students will practise using a planning tool to align their goals, objectives and strategies.
- Students will consider advice on a range of study-related topics.

Equipment

- 'What are my goals?' model
- 'SMART strategies' check-in tool
- Study advice sheet 1: Memory training
- Study advice sheet 2: Reducing exam pressure
- Study advice sheet 3: Exam technique

Method

Part A: Goal setting

1. Explain that the focus of the next activity is going to be on how to set goals, objectives and strategies. This is very important when setting out to accomplish something that takes sustained effort, like doing your best in the final years of school or pursuing a particular career.
2. Write the words 'goals', 'objectives' and 'strategies' on the board. Explain that although the words are often used interchangeably, they stand for different things and the distinction is quite useful.

A **goal** is a big general aim. It is usually long term and describes an accomplishment or achievement that someone puts effort into over a period of time. It may sum up someone's purpose. It tends to be broad. Some examples of goals include:

- Doing my best in the final years of school.
- Being a good friend.
- Living a healthy life.

An **objective** is also a target that someone aims for, but this word is used to refer to specific and concrete targets that are more short term in nature. Objectives are like the building blocks or steps that people take along the way towards their goal. They should be real, specific, occur in time and be measurable and attainable. Some examples of objectives include:

- Get my essays in on time.
- Keep up to date with homework.
- Show an interest in my friend's life.
- Maintain my fitness.
- A **strategy** is a plan that tells you how you will achieve your objective. For example:
- Do 3 hours of homework on Monday to Friday.
- Keep a calendar of due dates for work tasks.
- Write a set of study notes at the end of each unit of work.
- Store notes in a separate folder for each subject.
- Ask my friend about their day as we walk home together.
- Go for a 20-minute run on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

3. Complete an example with the class, demonstrating how to use the planning model.
4. Ask students to work in pairs or trios to complete a planning map including a goal, objectives and strategies. The goal should relate to their aspirations for their time in the senior end of the school.

   Encourage students to develop their strategies according to the SMART strategy, using the check-in tool on page 30 as a guide. SMART is an acronym of 5 criteria: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.
5. Arrange for some volunteers to report back to the class and encourage the use of specific strategies for pursuing study and self-care goals. Add more study specific suggestions if more are needed.

Part B: Study and exam preparation skills.

1. Explain that studying is not the same as doing homework. It is the extra activity you do to train yourself to perform in your exams and other assessment tasks. It is a form of memory training and skill development you do to prepare for the 'big match'.
2. Ask the class to work in pairs to brainstorm a list of all the things students might do when studying for exams.

   Pool the list from the class. Review the 'Study advice sheet 1: Memory training' with the class to look for additional suggestions.

   Emphasise that just as you can't develop all your fitness and ball skills in the week before a big match, you can't commit to memory all the knowledge you need to draw on in the last few days before exams. Study must be done across the term, with more intensive periods during the holidays and pre-exam period. This is why it is important to set up a study schedule (time management and scheduling is the focus of the next activity).
3. Refer students to the 'Study advice sheet 2: Reducing exam pressure' and 'Study advice sheet 3: Exam technique'. Ask them to read these guidelines and then to highlight the pointers they consider most important to them personally.
4. Ask for some feedback from the class on which pointers were highlighted and why. Encourage students to refer back to the study advice guidelines periodically throughout the year.
5. **Optional homework:** Ask students to complete a study plan for homework which encompasses their goals, objectives and strategies. Encourage them to regularly review and revise their strategies as their circumstances change and they find out more about what works for them. Remind them that when there is a breakdown, this does not mean they should throw out their objectives or forget their goal, but rather revisit, review and refresh their strategies.

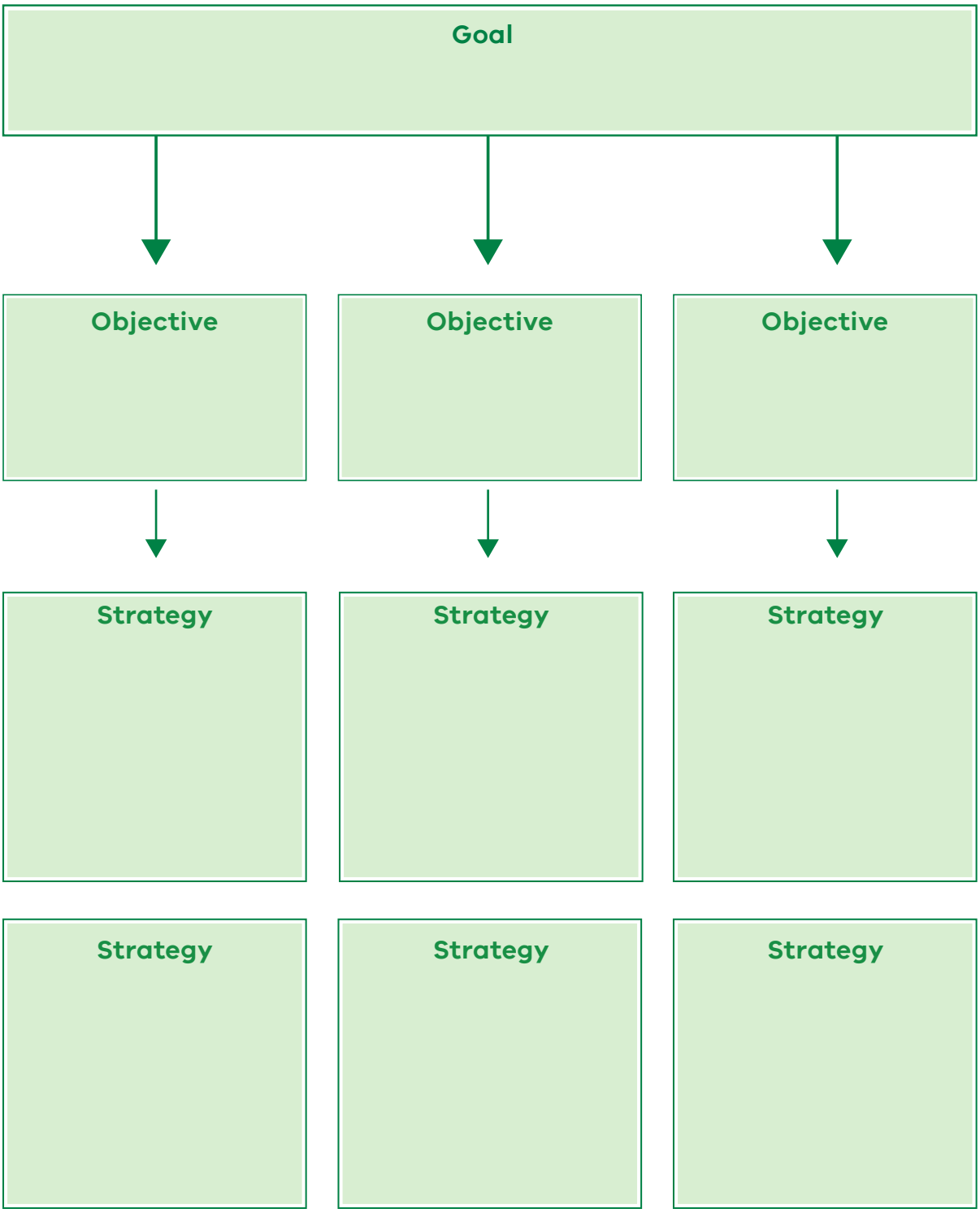
Review

Invite the class to review the learning intentions, by asking them to reflect on what they learned in the activity. Seek input on which aspects of the activity they found most useful in learning how to set personal goals and objectives. Challenge students to consider contexts where they might use the strategies they learned in this activity in the future (for example, starting university, starting a new job, planning a holiday etc.).

Coaching point:
Make mixing fun. 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 variety of people and gain confidence in crossing any friendship or gender divides that may be operative in the class. Strategies for making mixing fun include, asking students to:

- find a partner who has the same number of letters in their name
- find a partner roughly the same height as you
- find a partner of a different gender
- find a partner born in the same month as you.

‘What are my goals?’



SMART strategies check-in tool*

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Realistic	Timely
Did you say what you will actually do?	How will you know you've done it? How can it be seen, or noticed or heard?	Can it be done in the time frame? Do you need to change the amount or frequency?	Does this fit in with everything else?	Is this happening at the right time? When will you actually do this?

* The acronym is attributed to Peter Drucker

Study advice sheet 1: Memory training

- **Make notes along the way**: take notes while you are learning new material or very soon afterwards.
- **In your own words:** write your study notes in your own words to ensure you understand them.
- **Read notes:** read over your notes or recite them out aloud.
- **Predict and practise:** think of the questions you may be asked and practise answering them.
- **Summary flash cards**: make cards or notes containing main points, read them regularly, recite them aloud.
- **Use your devices:** record yourself reading your notes, use travel or chore time to listen to them and reinforce your understanding.
- **Exchange ideas:** discuss issues and topics with a small study group of friends or explain your notes to someone else.
- **Ask questions:** when you don't understand, write down the questions and check your textbook, or follow up with your teacher.
- **Mnemonics:** use letters or rhyme or rhythm, song or rap to help you remember key points.
- **Acronyms**: use the first letter of each word to prompt the memory.
- **Idea maps:** create pictures or diagrams that visually link concepts and areas of knowledge.
- **Group associations:** link ideas through themes and similarities.
- **Familiarity:** do practise exams and essays to help you get used to responding effectively.
- **Tactics:** set out definite strategies or ways you will go about solving problems, like using reading time and spreading your time across exam papers.
- **Control your devices:** choose the best times to access your devices. Consider when it might be helpful to turn them off, for example, during times when you need to concentrate.

Study advice sheet 2: Reducing exam pressure

Advice for reducing exam pressure:

- Put some of your social life on hold during the exam period.
- Plan rewards after the exams.
- Arrange for friends to visit or make contact only at agreed times.
- Walk or exercise daily for at least 20 minutes.
- Sleep 8 hours a night to rest your eyes and brain.
- Maintain a balanced diet.
- Avoid excessive caffeine and junk food.
- Use travel time to revise.
- Study actively by taking notes and doing past exam papers.
- Start final revision 8 weeks before the exams.
- Plan your time, prioritise.
- Avoid last minute cramming.
- Create a study timetable and follow it.
- During study week for exams, plan 3 study sessions per day plus breaks.
- Start at 9 am each day, stick to a routine.
- Avoid partying at critical periods.
- Ask your family to help you stick to your plan.
- Use your teachers' expertise.
- Display your exam timetable in a prominent place.
- Ensure the equipment you need for each exam is ready (and working!)
- Know the format of the exam for each subject.
- Put up lists and mind maps of quotes, formulas etc. in your room to look at them/recite them at least once a day.
- Be well prepared.
- Have faith in yourself, be positive.
- Be thorough and focused.

Study advice sheet 3: Exam technique

Advice for strengthening your exam technique.

- **In reading time:**
  - read and take note of the instructions
  - look at the mark allocation for questions and allocate your time accordingly
  - make sure you leave the right amount of time for the big questions
  - identify questions you can answer immediately
  - work out in which order you'll answer the questions.
- **In writing time:**
  - start on your selected question
  - do multiple choice and short answer questions before essays
  - don't dwell on tricky questions, highlight them and return.
- **Work steadily:**
  - don't rush, go steady, but with an eye on the time.
- **If you can't answer, then:**
  - guess, unless there's a penalty
  - beware of making hasty mistakes
  - draw clear diagrams
  - plan essays
  - work at the rate you practised.
- **Use all the exam time:**
  - never leave early
  - read over what you have done.
- **On exam day:**
  - eat a healthy breakfast
  - wear comfortable clothing
  - exercise briefly
  - avoid caffeine
  - don't play loud music or review work on exam day
  - arrive early
  - speak positively and give encouragement to yourself and others
  - ensure all equipment is working
  - use some self-calming breathing techniques for a couple of minutes if you are very nervous.
- **In the exam:**
  - sit where you can see the clock
  - use reading time well
  - provide an outline or essay plan of sections you can't finish
  - check your work
  - never leave early
  - write legibly
  - remember, you are in control of you.

Topic 01

Activity 3: Time management and procrastination

Learning intentions

- Students will practise using a planning tool to assist with time management.
- Students will access and share advice on a range of study-related topics related to procrastination and effective use of time.

Equipment

- 'How do I spend my time?' tool
- 'Sample timetable' tool
- Study advice sheet 4: Avoiding procrastination
- Study advice sheet 5: Tips for using the holidays well

Method

Part A: Time management

1. Explain that the first activity is designed to help students to plan how they will use their time effectively.

   Play a quick Statues Game where you call out the time of day and students adopt an instant pose which indicates what they are doing at that time of day (for example, sleeping, showering, eating, studying, travelling, chatting).

2. Ask students to work on a 24-hour clock across the 7 days of their last week and estimate how they spent their time. Students can complete their audit using the 'How do I spend my time?' tool. They should include: sleeping, eating and dressing, homework, travelling, being at school (including class time), sport or exercising, leisure or TV, socialising or social networking, part-time job.

3. Ask them to compare with partners or a small group. Were they surprised by any of the results? Did they find anything that was eating up too much time? What strategies might they use to deal with this?

4. Ask students to make themselves a basic study schedule, which shows when they are at school and when they are doing other things. Ask students to use the 'Sample timetable' tool to develop their own personal timetable, then compare with a friend. Emphasise the need for sufficient sleep. Aim for 8 hours daily.

5. Explain that it is common for people to make good plans, but then to find themselves doing something else instead – either procrastinating or favouring their preferred or easier tasks.

   Ask students to remember a time when they just got on with getting something done and didn't procrastinate (this could be an activity related to study, sport, work, home chores, planning a social event or doing a hobby).

   Based on that memory, ask them to share their own tips for avoiding procrastination. Collect these tips on the board.

6. For additional advice on dealing with the problem of procrastination, go through the study advice sheets 4 and 5 with students, clarifying meaning and asking for feedback or for examples of when people have successfully used these techniques to best utilise available time.

   Ask student to select the 5 tips they find to be most useful and write them in their diaries.

Part B: Study and holidays

1. Explain that in senior school, holidays aren't fully holidays. They do include time off, but they are also for study.
2. Ask students to brainstorm a collective class list about what sorts of things they think they should be doing during the holidays.
3. Add the following four tips for using the holidays well:
   - **Relax and recharge your batteries:** Get some good sleep and exercise. Wind down from the usual daily stress. Do some social, family, fun and leisure activities.
   - **Get yourself organised:** Tidy your room, desk, schoolbag, computer.
   - **Get on top of your subjects:** Revise and summarise for each subject, make study notes, do practise exercises, essays and exams.
   - **Review your study schedule:** Review the approach you took to the last term. Revise your schedule and approach where necessary to suit the challenges of the next term.

Review

Review the learning intentions with the group. Ask students to reflect on what they learned. Ask them if they feel that the learning activity was helpful in terms of providing advice on study-related topics.

How do I spend my time?

Fill in the number of hours you would spend daily on each activity.

Activity (no. of hours)	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total
Sleeping								
Eating								
Dressing								
Homework								
Travelling								
Class time								
Break time								
Sport or exercise								
Leisure or TV								
Social media								
Chores								
Socialising								
Part-time job								
Games								
Other								
Daily Total								

Sample timetable

A typical weekday could have:

- 8 hours for sleep
- 1 hour for exercise
- 1 hour for dressing, showering, getting organised
- 1 hour for travelling to school
- 0.5 hours for chores
- 6 hours for class time
- 3 hours for homework or music practise etc.
- 1.5 hours for meals and breaks
- 1 hour for socialising or networking
- 1 hour for leisure.

A typical weekend day could have:

- 8 hours for sleep
- 2 to 3 hours for exercise or sports
- 1 hour for dressing, showering, getting organised
- 1 hour for chores
- 3 to 4 hours for homework or music practise etc.
- 2 hours for meals and breaks
- 2 hours for socialising or networking
- 3 to 4 hours for leisure and relaxation.

Tips during exam periods:

- Reduce weekend socialising time.
- Increase weekend time for study.
- Reduce time spent in paid work.
- Maintain time for adequate sleep and exercise.
- Complete weekend study hours during the daytime.
- Fill some social needs by studying with others.

Study advice sheet 4: Avoiding procrastination

The following tips can help you to avoid procrastinating:

- **Review your habits:**
  - identify the kinds of tasks that you tend to put off
  - identify the things you tend to do to avoid these tasks (for example, computer games, personal grooming, TV).

- **Work out what is urgent and important:**
  - make a list of the urgent or 'must do' tasks; the important or 'should do' tasks; and the fun or 'like to do' tasks
  - over breakfast each day review your timetable to show when you will do the 'must do', 'should do' tasks and 'like to do' tasks for that day and week.

- **Make a timetable:**
  - break down big work tasks into achievable chunks
  - prioritise your tasks
  - do some of the 'musts' and some 'shoulds' each day
  - set realistic deadlines
  - commit to sticking at one task for at least 20 minutes.

- **Get support to stick to your timetable:**
  - set your timer
  - ask family members to help you stick to your schedule
  - get a study buddy
  - study at the library to get away from distractions.

- **Use visual reminders:**
  - put your goals and objectives for the year on your bedroom wall
  - put a copy of your study timetable on your wall
  - publish your work hours on the fridge, so your family know when you should be working and when you should be taking time off.

- **Use positive self-talk:**
  - tell yourself: 'I can do it; I will do it. Even when I don't feel like working, I will, because I am in control.'
  - tell yourself: 'When I break down on sticking to my timetable, I will not give up, I will review and restart.'

- **Use rewards:**
  - reward yourself when you finish a task
  - tick off the item on your 'to do' list
  - enjoy a short, fun task.

Study advice sheet 5: Tips for using the holidays well

The following are tips for using the holiday well:

- **Relax and recharge your batteries:**
  - get some good sleep and exercise.
  - wind down from the usual daily stress.
- **Do some social, family and leisure activities.**
- **Get yourself organised:**
  - tidy your room, desk, schoolbag, computer.
- **Get on top of your subjects:**
  - revise and summarise for each subject
  - make study notes
  - do practise exercises, essays and exams.
- **Review your study schedule:**
  - Review the approach you took to the last term.
  - Revise your schedule and approach where necessary to suit the challenges of the next term.

These are some strategies to help you.

- Keep your body clock on track for work by getting out of bed at the usual school time and avoiding late nights (have one sleep in per week as reward).
- On the first day of the holidays, plan your holiday study timetable (list all activities, including the ones for fun and leisure).
- Study in the morning or early afternoon (aim for relaxing evenings).
- Include two leisure or relaxation activities per day.
- Eat healthy food, get some exercise and enough sleep (aim for 8 hours).
- Reward yourself after you've done the work each day (not before).

Reflecting on everyday practise

Ask yourself:

- 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?
- how can your feedback to students be strengths-based and positive?
- how do you help your students to think through how they might study for exams or prepare for demanding tasks?

Talking further

Encourage students to:

- talk with their parents or carers about the support they would find helpful in assisting them to stick to their study plan
- talk with parents or carers about the strategies they have used to help them address challenges in managing commitments and getting things done
- share their study timetable with others at home, and ask for assistance with sticking to the plan, or adjusting it when needed.

Optional game

The Knots Game works well to raise topic-related themes like persistence and problem-solving. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.



Topic 02 Stress and coping

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify common stressors for young people in the final years of school
- identify effective coping strategies
- consider how to support friends if they are stressed
- use positive self-talk techniques when responding to change and challenge relating to study or social relationships.

Informed by the evidence base

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

It is important that students develop a robust portfolio of coping strategies to manage the diverse challenges they may face in relation to study, work, leisure, relationships and family life.

Coping strategies can be learnt by modelling and coping styles can therefore be informed by gender norms. [11] An explicit focus on how people cope can assist people to interrogate their use of unproductive strategies and build a more diverse set of micro strategies. Use of positive self-talk is one strategy that can be learnt or strengthened through practise. [12, 13] This is important as research shows that use of positive self-talk is associated with greater persistence in the face of challenge, where negative self-talk is associated with higher levels of distress, depression and anxiety. [14] 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. In contrast, 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.

Topic 02

Activity 1: Strategies for coping with stress and challenge

Learning intentions

- Students will identify and share common stressors and preferred coping strategies.
- Students will provide examples of proactive and reactive coping strategies and identify situations where each might make a positive contribution.

Equipment

- Notebooks and pens or digital device
- 'Coping portfolio' guide

Method

1. Ask students to draw a quick sketch to represent one or more causes of stress. Provide a worked example using your own sketch. Invite some volunteers to share their images.
2. Acknowledge that although we all deal with stress, we all have many coping strategies to assist us to deal with what is happening in our environment.
3. Ask students what they understand by the term 'coping strategy'. Collect some examples. Give some examples yourself, for example, reading a book, going for a walk, tidying or organising. To review this area, refer to the activities in Topic 3 of the Years 7–8 and 9–10 curriculums.

   Provide an example of a coping portfolio. A coping portfolio is a collection of coping strategies a person can select to match their various circumstances and challenges. This is important, as a strategy that works for one situation may not be helpful in a different situation. For example, watching TV, gaming or reading a book can be great for distraction or when you need to take your mind off things, but the same strategy won't be as effective for exam preparation, or when getting ready for a driving test. In these instances, having plan, getting a study buddy or spending time practising could be more useful strategies.
4. Display the 5 key categories of a robust 'coping portfolio' and invite students to populate their own portfolio, with 2 or more strategies for each category.
5. Arrange for students to share and compare their portfolio with partners or within a small group.

   Coping portfolio guide: Key categories and examples of coping strategies

   - **Energetic activity** – include things like exercise, sport, dance, active play which can help lift your mood.
   - **Self-calming activity** – include things that calm you down, like drawing, meditation, praying, being in a quiet space, listening to soothing music, taking a shower, snuggling in bed.
   - **Social activity** – include things to connect you with others, like talking things over, help-seeking or hanging out with others.
   - **Shift attention** – include things that take your mind to a different place, like reading, watching TV, playing games, doing a favourite hobby.
   - **Getting organised** – include activities that help you plan and get organised, like making lists, tidying up, planning, organising an activity, making a schedule.

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking students to comment on how the activity helped them to reflect on the kinds of coping strategies they use most often, whether these have been productive or unproductive, helpful or potentially harmful. Encourage them to deliberately deploy a range of helpful and productive coping strategies.

Coaching point:
Positive peer modelling. It is important to collect examples of positive coping strategies from the class, as students can learn via positive peer modelling which helps to normalise conversations about stress and coping.

Topic 02

Activity 2: Managing self-talk when under stress

Learning intentions

- Students will identify the differences between positive self-talk, negative self-talk and technical self-talk.
- Students will develop positive self-talk scripts designed for use when encountering stress or challenge.

Equipment

- 'Scripting for success' self-talk template
- 'I am, I can, I will' scripts

Method

1. Explain that the focus of this activity will be on the way that our self-talk or internal conversation affects our performance when we are under pressure. Co-create a definition of self-talk.
   - 'Negative self-talk' is when we say negative or disenabling things to ourselves.
   - 'Positive self-talk' is when we say positive or enabling things to ourselves.
   - 'Technical self-talk' is when we tell ourselves how to do things while we are doing them.

   Explain that in this activity the focus will be on using technical self-talk and positive self-talk as a tool in exam preparation, and in preparation for dealing with other types of performance pressure, for example, when going for a job interview or going on a first date.

Coaching point:
Positive, negative and technical self-talk.
Psychologists have found that when people use positive self-talk before or during a challenge then they are more likely to succeed. For example, positive self-talk when approaching an exam could sound like, 'I am going to stay calm and focused and give this my best effort', whereas negative self-talk might sound like, 'I am hopeless, or I am sure to mess this up'.

Positive self-talk helps with persistence. People doing long distance or endurance events are more likely to make it to the finish if they use positive self-talk. Studying across your final year is a certain kind of marathon because you have to keep at it for a long time. For persistence, positive self-talk could sound like, 'I can stick at this', whereas negative self-talk might sound like, 'It's too hard, I will never make it'.

Technical self-talk refers to how something can be done. It might include telling yourself which actions to take at various stages of the challenge. Technical self-talk might sound like: 'I am going to read the exam paper, look at the marks allocated to each question and work out how much time to allocate to each. Then I will choose the one I like best to start on and be ready to go once the instruction to start writing is given.'

2. Distribute the 'Scripting for success' self-talk template. Ask pairs to select one of the performance challenges (or add a challenge of their own).
   - Option 1: Exam preparation
   - Option 2: First date
   - Option 3: Apologising after a wrongdoing
   - Option 4: Driving test
   - Option 5: Self-selected

   The pair's task is to develop a positive self-talk script for each of 3 time periods leading up to the performance challenge (days before, hours before and minutes before). Use the example provided first to model how to do the exercise (this could be shown on a slide or read out or distributed as a handout). Provide students with the 'I am, I can, I will' scripts as a resource to use to help them with ideas.
3. Once groups have finished, ask them to share these scripts. Hearing them read aloud (or performed) is one way to provide positive role-modelling (alternatives include inviting students to present their self-talk script as a rap, motivational slogan or song).

Review

Review the learning intentions with the class by asking students to reflect on what they learned. Ask which aspects of the learning activity they found most useful in helping them to understand the concepts of positive self-talk, negative self-talk and technical self-talk. Ask students to give examples of where they will draw on what they learned in this lesson in the future. Encourage students to keep the scripts as a resource to use when working on their own positive self-talk.

Coaching point:

Inputs box. Consider providing an 'inputs' or question box where students can post their questions or comments, either anonymously or with their name if they prefer. Intermittently invite all students to contribute 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 which will help them, or the class move forward), or to feed back to comment on how things are working. Allow time to review students' contributions after class and use the following sessions to respond to questions or feedback as appropriate.

Example challenge: Job interview

Days before	Hours before	Minutes before
I tell myself **I am**: hardworking, reliable, friendly, employable	I tell myself **I am**: well-prepared, enthusiastic about learning on the job	I tell myself **I am**: capable of being calm under pressure, ready to respond to questions
I tell myself **I can:** show respect to customers, arrive on time, follow instructions, fit work into my study and social life	I tell myself **I can**: give good answers, make a positive impression, ask the right kind of questions	I tell myself **I can:** smile, stay calm, think of an answer to the questions I am asked
I tell myself **I will**: borrow suitable clothes, prepare my clothes in advance, develop answers to questions they might ask	I tell myself **I will**: have a shower and get neat, take the early bus to make sure I won't be late	I tell myself **I will**: smile and introduce myself, ask them to repeat a question if it's unclear, tell them I am very keen to work in their firm

Scripting for success self-talk template

The Challenge:			
The self-talk pattern	**Days before**	**Hours before**	**Minutes before**
I am… (name some of your strengths)	I will tell myself I am	I will tell myself I am	I will tell myself I am
I can… (choose some evidence that shows what you can do or where you have done something similar before)	I will tell myself I can	I will tell myself I can	I will tell myself I can
I will… (say what you will actually do – this is technical self-talk)	I will tell myself I will	I will tell myself I will	I will tell myself I will

I am, I can, I will scripts

I am or there are times when I have been...			
Accepting	Independent	Fair	Sympathetic
Adaptable	Intelligent	Faithful	Tactful
Adventurous	Inclusive	Far-sighted	Task-oriented
Affectionate	Inventive	Flexible	Thoughtful
Ambitious	Joyful	Forthright	Tidy
Amusing	Kind	Friendly	Inclusive
Analytical	Logical	Fun-loving	Trustworthy
Appreciative	Loving	Funny	Unaffected
Approachable	Loyal	Generous	Understanding
Articulate	Motivated	Gentle	Versatile
Attentive	Neat	Hardworking	Warm-hearted
Aware	Objective	Helpful	Well-behaved
Brave	Open-minded	Honest	Witty
Bright	Optimistic	Idealistic	Reliable
Broadminded	Organised	Imaginative	Resourceful
Calm	Outgoing	Deep	Respectful
Careful	Outspoken	Definite	Self-disciplined
Caring	Patient	Dependable	Sensible
Charming	Positive	Determined	Sensitive
Cheerful	Perceptive	Easy-going	Sincere
Clever	Playful	Efficient	Sociable
Compassionate	Polite	Encouraging	Stable
Conscientious	Practical	Energetic	Strong
Cool-headed	Punctual	Dedicated	Supportive
Courageous	Realistic	Creative	Reasonable

I am, I can, I will scripts

I can...	
stick at it when the going is tough	speak up even if I am scared
learn from my mistakes	use what I have been taught
apologise when in the wrong	offer help when I see it is needed
turn up even if I don't feel like it	ask for help when I get stuck
work out how to manage my time	be flexible and adapt to change
explain what I need	do the right thing even others don't
accept the way I look	show friendship even if no one else does
bounce back after disappointment	be caring even when others aren't
handle being different	control myself even when I am angry
forgive when someone wrongs me	be friendly even when I am shy
stick at it in tough times	keep my promises
speak truth to power	take responsibility
show compassion	plan for my own safety and wellbeing

I will...		
make a study plan	ask for help	say sorry
tidy up	offer to help	close devices from 10pm to 7 am
get there on time	ask how they are	plan my essay

Topic 02

Activity 3: Coping in context

Learning intention

- Students will identify positive coping strategies for use in a response to different contexts or challenges.

Equipment

- 'Coping strategies' scenarios

Method

1. Put students into small groups. Give each group a scenario and ask them to work through the issues addressing key questions to determine what coping strategies the person should use.
2. For each strategy, ask: 'Is this strategy likely to be helpful or unhelpful? What might happen if they did this? What strengths might be needed for someone to use this strategy?'
3. Ask two groups of students who worked on the same scenario to compare suggestions.
4. Ask a volunteer to read out one of the scenarios then gather the suggested coping strategies.

Individual task: Ask students to give written advice to the student in their scenario, short enough to fit into a text message, beginning with, 'If I could say one thing…'. Ask them to determine what that advice would be.

Review

Review the learning intention by asking the class to reflect on what they learned. Ask students which aspects of the activity were most useful in helping them to identify positive or proactive coping strategies suited to particular contexts or challenges.

Coaching point:
Using short-term goals to reduce stress. Some people respond to stress by working harder and harder (overworking) or setting very high standards or goals for themselves and telling themselves they are failures if they don't meet them. They may need to set more realistic goals. Others may respond to stress by denying the real challenge, failing to set any short-term goals and not even beginning to work towards achieving them. They may need help to define their short-term goals.

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

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.)

Coping strategies scenarios

Thuy

Thuy is running in the interschool athletics sports in a couple of weeks. She's been finding it hard to keep up her training routine due to study demands and helping to care for her younger siblings. She's considering just dropping out, even though athletics has always been the thing she most enjoyed and she had been-considering a future in sports sciences.

What coping strategies could she use?

In what ways might each of these strategies be helpful?

Jessie

Jessie broke a collarbone and sprained an ankle in a cycling accident and it's really slowing them down with everything. To make it worse, exercise was their main way to de-stress and now this option is not available.

What coping strategies could they use?

In what ways might each of these strategies be helpful?

Dinesh

Dinesh is really nervous about being ready to perform his solo at the concert which is now only 2 weeks away. Friends and family will all be there and somehow that always makes Dinesh more nervous. He feels particularly stressed at the idea he won't live up to the standard set by his older sibling.

What coping strategies could he use?

In what ways might each of these strategies be helpful?

Kirra

Kirra is juggling the demands of upcoming exams, sporting commitments and a part-time job. She's finding it hard to put aside enough time for study, especially as her boss keeps asking her to do extra shifts.

What coping strategies could she use?

In what ways might each of these strategies be helpful?

Construct your own scenario where someone encounters a challenge

Topic 02

Activity 4: Relaxation techniques

Learning intention

- Students will experience using a self-calming or relaxation technique.

Equipment

- Relaxing music – students could take it in turns to choose music for the occasion
- Relaxation script

Method

1. Explain that when we are in situations of heightened or prolonged stress, we benefit from use of explicit relaxation techniques like meditation or progressive muscle relaxation. The next activity will provide students with a chance to try a form of progressive muscle relaxation; they will be guided to tighten and then relax muscles to help reduce tension.
2. Ask students to sit comfortably in their chairs (or lie on the floor) and close their eyes. Explain you will play the relaxation music quietly and then talk them through which muscles to focus on. Invite them to try it out to see how it works for them.
3. Use the following script (or use another of your own choosing) to guide the progressive muscle relaxation.

Relaxation script

You are going to tense different muscles as much as you can without discomfort, then relax them. Focus your attention on each muscle group that I mention. Try to tighten only the intended muscles while the rest of your body stays quiet and relaxed. Breathe slowly and deeply.

- Tighten the muscles in your toes and feet. Hold for a count of 10. Relax.
- Now tighten your lower legs. Hold for a count of 10. Relax. Breathe.
- Now tighten your stomach and back. Hold for a count of 10. Relax. Breathe.
- Now tighten your neck, head and face. Hold for a count of 10. Relax. Breathe.
- Now tense every muscle in your body and feel tension in every part of your body. Hold for 10, then relax.
- Scan the body for any remaining tension and relax that part of the body. Feel a wave of calmness as you stop tensing. Let your body melt.
- Let yourself breathe naturally for a few minutes. Enjoy feeling relaxed.
- Now wiggle your toes, now your fingers. You are preparing to come back to your normal routine.
- In a moment you will open your eyes. Take a moment or two to return to your normal position.

Ask students to write about their experience, or alternatively ask them to share with a partner how that experience felt. Ask for some volunteers to report on how the experience worked for them.

Explain that they can use a similar technique seated on a chair or lying on their bed at times when they want to help themselves wind down.

4. Invite students to share some of the self-calming strategies that work for them.
5. If time permits, sample some different types of music which people find relaxing, or some compositions devised specifically to assist with relaxation. Encourage students to compare their responses and preferences.

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking the class to reflect on what they learned in this self-calming activity. Ask them to identify times when the technique practised in this activity could be useful.

Coaching point:
Relaxation sessions are beneficial for students. Consider using this relaxation technique in the future – particularly at stressful times during the year. Invite students to choose some suitable music or to run the activity for the class. If there's no time to do a full relaxation or visualisation, 5 minutes daily of sitting silently with heads down, just listening to quiet music can be helpful. The Smiling Mind website has a range of mindfulness and meditation material.

Reflecting on everyday practise

Review your own self-talk. Ask yourself:

- Would you describe your thinking style as optimistic or pessimistic and how might this affect your students?
- How do you manage your own stress levels?
- What is your preferred method of self-calming?

Talking further

Encourage students to:

- practise positive self-talk in relation to their school, family and social situations
- talk with friends and family about the ways they motivate themselves when they get stuck, lose confidence or face a big challenge.

Optional game

The Chopsticks Game works well to raise topic-related themes like collaboration, empathy and problem-solving. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.



Topic 03 Safer socialising

Aims

Activities within this topic will assist students to:

- practise use of active listening as a skill for peer support
- rehearse strategies for peer support conversations
- practise use of respectful and assertive modes of communication to express their needs, feelings or opinions

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

Relationships matter. Students in the final 2 years of secondary school are rarely provided with relationships education, despite its increasing relevance for this age group. [15] However, young people report that learning how to navigate the complexities of relationships can be challenging and that it can be difficult to know how to deal with issues such as asserting their rights and needs. Numerous studies conducted with young people find that they want to know more about how to conduct healthy interpersonal relationships based on respect [16], and opportunities to develop their skills in communicating effectively within peer relationships [17, 18]. Collaborative learning strategies are fundamental to the effectiveness of relationships education programs. [19, 20] They assist students to rehearse and develop the communicative skills that they can employ in their lives [18].

Topic 03

Activity 1: Active listening for peer support

Learning intention

- Students will practise the skill of 'active listening' as a strategy for peer support.

Method

1. Explain that one of the challenges that can occur when friends try to support each other in problem-solving is that the person with the problem does not get listened to well enough to feel understood. When people are given the opportunity to talk through how they feel, and to explore options for action, they can be empowered to formulate their own solutions or responses to problems.
2. Write the term 'active listening' on the board. Explain that it is a technique for listening supportively to someone.

> Active listening is designed to make sure your attention stays on the speaker and doesn't swing around to all the points *you* want to make. It is a technique designed to make the listener feel respected and understood.
>
> It involves the listener in feeding back what they hear to the speaker; putting what they have heard in a summary in their own words. This allows the speaker to correct them if they have misunderstood or shows the speaker that they were understood. It can also help the speaker to clarify what it is that they are thinking or trying to communicate.
>
> Active listening can also involve picking up on the person's body language and level of emotionality and feeding back on that. Active listening is not a way of saying you agree with the speaker. Rather it is a way of showing that you understand what the speaker is saying or feeling.

3. Ask students to work in pairs to try out the active listening technique. Person A will be the speaker, and Person B the active listener. It may be helpful to do a quick demonstration where the teacher role-plays Person B.

> **Person A**
>
> - Think of something you want to complain about.
> - Begin your complaint when Person B asks how you are.
> - Respond to prompts from Person B.
>
> **Person B**
>
> - Carefully listen and observe Person A speaking.
> - Reflect back what you heard Person A say.
> - Check for accuracy, ask a clarifying question if you are unsure.
> - Reflect back the feelings portrayed by Person A's tone, facial expressions, body language as well as further comments.
> - Check for accuracy.

4. After a minute or two in role, ask players to stop. Invite Person A to give feedback to their partner on how well they felt listened to. They should note anything their partner did that helped them to share their situation and which made them feel respected and understood.
5. Invite students to share some of this feedback with the class.
6. Provide an opportunity for players to role-swap, to ensure each student experiences the listener role. Provide further time for feedback on how it felt for the speaker and for the active listener.

Review

Review the learning intention with the class by asking students to reflect which aspects of the learning activity they found most useful in helping them to practise the skill of active listening to provide peer support, or to understand the contribution that active listening can make within a relationship.

Topic 03

Activity 2: Peer support for problem solving

Learning intention

- Students will identify and practise ways of encouraging peers to identify the effect of negative self-talk, and to use positive or technical self-talk.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Strengths-based questions for peer support' resource

Coaching point:
Why use role-play? Engaging in role-play offers a rehearsal for life. Watching others role-play can help with modelling these skills. Seek or build strong examples to help create this sense of possibility. However, if role-playing is difficult for the class, an option is to have some volunteers work in demonstration mode, or to arrange for students to work in pairs to co-construct help-seeking scripts. Even framing and describing what could be said will provide a level of modelling.

Method

1. Point out to students that as well as using active listening strategies within peer support conversations, it can be useful to use strengths-based questions when a friend wants to think through their approach to addressing a challenge.

   Strengths-based questions for peer support
   Introduce the following 5 questions for use in problem-solving conversations with friends:

   - What usually works for you when you are under this kind of pressure?
   - Can you use any of those tactics here?
   - What would you say that you need right now?
   - What do you think would be the best thing for you to do right now?
   - Do you want to hear some other possibilities that I can think of?

2. Ask people to work in trios and brainstorm a few common problems that can cause stress, choosing from the low to medium range, not from the most distressing end of the spectrum. Examples might include:

   - I can't get started with my homework until I'm in a panic around a due date
   - I keep getting into stupid arguments with my parents over really minor things
   - I end up spending too much time on social media
   - I am spending too much time stressing about what to wear.

3. Ask students to choose one of the situations as a basis for a role-play. One person will play the person with the problem, one will play the helping friend, who contributes both active listening and strengths-based questions. The third person will be the observer who watches and gives feedback on how the use of active listening and supportive questions helps the conversation to move forward.
4. Ask the helping friend to begin the role-play by asking their friend what is bothering them and then experimenting with active listening and strengths-based questions to encourage positive and or technical self-talk on the part of the distressed person.
5. Call a stop to the role-play and provide time for the observer to give feedback on what they noted happening in the conversation and for the players to provide their own observations about the exercise.
6. Provide time to repeat the exercise with each player assuming a different role and choosing a different problem as the basis for their role-play.
7. Offer each trio time for reflection and feedback and invite students to comment on the effect that active listening plus strengths-based questions had on the thinking of the distressed person.

Review

Review the learning intention with the class by asking students to reflect on what they learned. Ask which aspects of the learning activity they found most useful in helping them to understand how to deliberately use positive and technical self-talk. Ask students to give examples of where they could draw on the skills they have practised (in using positive and technical self-talk) during this lesson in the next month (for example, at exam time, before a date, on the first day of a new job etc.).

Coaching point:

Using help sources. Remind students that if negative self-talk is getting them down, they can go to the wellbeing leader, a favourite teacher, a GP or a trusted parent or adult. They can also use help sites like those listed on the Victorian Government's **Students - mental health and wellbeing toolkit** https://www.vic.gov.au/students-mental-health-toolkit *or* **LGBTIQA+ Student Support pages** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/resources for support.

Topic 03

Activity 3: Assertive talk

Learning intentions

- Students will describe the differences between assertive, aggressive and submissive modes of communication.
- Students will identify a range of situations where it is useful to be assertive.
- Students will practise the skills of assertive communication.

Equipment

- Notebooks and pens or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that self-talk is one way we work on ourselves. But we also need good ways to talk to others when things are not working for us. Sometimes when we are stressed we 'dump' on other people and take it out on them by being angry. We might push them around or take advantage of them. This can lead to them getting upset as well, and everyone getting more stressed. We call this being aggressive.

   At other times we go too far in the extent to which we put up with people treating us badly, or we don't let people know about our own needs or feelings. Sometimes we call this being a 'doormat' or being over-dependent. A more technical term is being 'submissive'. The term 'assertive' is used to describe the middle position between aggressive and submissive. When we are assertive, we use a strong but respectful style to express our own needs and opinions.

   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. I couldn't care less what you want!'

   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, 'What I want matters, but what you want matters 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, 'As long as you're happy, don't worry about me.'

2. Provide a demonstration where you model an aggressive, a submissive and an assertive response.
3. Ask pairs of students to prepare and show a brief scenario showing an aggressive, a submissive and an assertive version of the same scene. Students may choose their own situation or one from the list:
   - The boss asks you to work extra hours with no notice and you have an exam in 2 days that you need time to study for.
   - Your friends tell you that they are coming to your house to study so you can help them with their maths, but you want to have the time to finish your own maths assignment.
   - Your parent tells you what hairstyle you must have.
   - Your sibling borrows something but does not give it back clean.
   - Your friend borrows money from you but never talks about paying it back.
   - You want to leave the party at the agreed time, but your friends want to stay on. You have study to do the next day and don't want to be too tired to concentrate.
4. Ask students to pair–share and discuss: 'In what situations are they more likely to be aggressive, submissive or assertive?' Ask some pairs to share their ideas with the class.
5. Explain that assertiveness is a healthy way of communicating. It is a way of speaking up for ourselves in a manner that respects both our own rights and those of the person we address. Assertiveness can be a way to be both honest and respectful. Explain that assertive statements are useful when there is conflict or a problem to be resolved or when there is a need to talk about boundaries, expectations, preferences, feelings or needs.

Review

Review the learning intentions with the class. Ask which aspects of the learning activity they found most useful in helping them to understand the concept of assertiveness. Ask for a volunteer to remind the group what we mean by 'assertive communication'. Ask which aspects of the lesson helped them to practise the skills of assertive communication.

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.

Topic 03

Activity 4: Explaining how you feel

Learning intentions

- Students will learn about the use of 'I' statements to tell others how they feel.
- Students will practise making assertive 'I' statements.

Equipment

- 'Being assertive' prompts
- Notebooks and pens or digital devices

Method

1. Explain that assertive statements are useful when there is conflict or a relationship problem to be resolved. They are also useful when you want to let others know about your feelings, preferences, needs, wants or concerns. When we are dealing with stress or with relationship challenges, it is helpful to be able to tell people how we feel while still controlling the way we express our emotions. This can be done in a respectful way through an 'I' statement. In an 'I' statement, we own the feeling, explain the feeling and may make requests or assert our boundaries.

   The following formats can be useful for making an 'I' statement:

   - **Feelings first:**
     I feel... (say how you feel) **when**... (state the action or happening), **so**... (make your request here).
   - **Situation first:**
     When... (state the action or happening),
     I feel... (say how you feel), **so**... (make your request here).
   - **'I' statement without a request:** (used just to share how you feel).
   - **I feel**... (say how you feel) **when**... (state the action or happening).

2. Give students some examples, like the following 'Being assertive' prompts.

   Being assertive prompts

   - **I feel** that you don't care about how things affect me **when** you don't listen to my side of the story, **so** please let me explain what was happening from my side.
   - **I worry** about your safety **when** you come home late, so can you please text me if you are running late.
   - **When** you don't show me your draft, **I get worried** that you don't know how to get started, **so** can you let me know what is going on with your essay.
   - **When** you yell at me, **I feel** hurt and humiliated, **so** can we slow down and talk about this calmly.

3. Put the class into pairs and ask them to help each other to design and practise an assertive 'I' statement that is relevant in their life. Provide students with access to the 'Being assertive' prompts to help them plan their statements.

4. Ask some volunteers to share their statements with the class. Alternatively, ask each pair to perform one of their 'I' statements and then ask the class to give feedback, by looking at:
   - did the character find a way to share about how the situation affects them or makes them feel?
   - was the character able to make an assertive request?
   - what did they do well?
   - what could they have done differently?

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking students to reflect on what they learned. Ask if the lesson was useful in helping them learn about the use of 'I' statements to tell others how they feel. Ask which aspects of the lesson were useful in helping them to understand and practise 'I' statements and to combine them with making an assertive request.

Coaching point:

Inclusion and diversity. Australian data highlights the importance of advancing respect for diversity. One in 5 (20.2%) young people aged 15 to 19 years identify as holding both cultural and spiritual beliefs, with another 1 in 5 (20.2%) reporting just spiritual beliefs and 1 in 10 (10.3%) just cultural beliefs. The remainder (49.3%) said they had no beliefs. In the same study, young people who reported being treated unfairly or discriminated against in the past year cited the top 3 reasons for the unfair treatment as their gender (38.6%), race or cultural background (31.3%) and mental health (28.9%). Two in 5 (40.2%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people reported they had been unfairly treated or discriminated against in the last year. Almost half (48.5%) said race or cultural background was the reason for their unfair treatment. [4]

Topic 03

Activity 5: Social problem-solving – exploring possibilities for prevention or intervention

Learning intention

- Students will use a problem-solving tool to explore causal drivers, response strategies and possible consequences of approaches to deal with problems affecting peer relationships.

Equipment

- 'Social problem-solving' scenarios

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. Explain that problem-solving is often conducted within friendships and so decisions may involve competing emotions and loyalties. The next activity will have students think about the sorts of strategies that people can use when what they want and what their friends want may not the be same thing, or when they must consider safety as well as fun when making social choices.
2. Put students in groups of 4 to 6. Explain that each group will select a problem scenario. Their task will be to use the 'problem tree' to map possible causal drivers, identify possible prevention or intervention strategies to be used by the key character or characters and their possible outcomes. The tree diagram is used as the tool. The problem is written on the trunk. Possible causes of the problem or causes of it remaining stuck in place are written onto the roots. Possible strategies to address the problem are added into the branches. The leaves are used to locate the possible consequences of the strategies, including positive, negative and null outcomes.
3. After time to work on their scenario, invite groups to identify their selected problem and report on the causal drivers and possible strategies and outcomes. As groups present their scenarios and report back, discuss:
   - Are there any other strategies that could have been considered?
   - Are there any other options they could have used earlier as prevention strategies?
   - What would it take for the key character to be able to carry out the preferred option? What kind of strengths and assertiveness skills might they need?
   - What does it take to do what is right for you, when peers are heading in a different direction?
4. Advise students that learning activities provided in Topic 4 are designed to focus on issues related to respectful relationships, prevention of gender-based violence and help-seeking in response to psychological distress, abuse and violence. Some of the content will address sensitive issues like sexual violence, family violence, financial problems, body image concerns and mental health distress.

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.

Review

Invite the class to review the learning intentions by asking them to reflect on whether they found the 'tree' problem-solving model helpful. Ask them to think to themselves about where they might use this strategy to support problem-solving efforts in the future.

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 staff room or classroom conversation and any records will be securely handled.

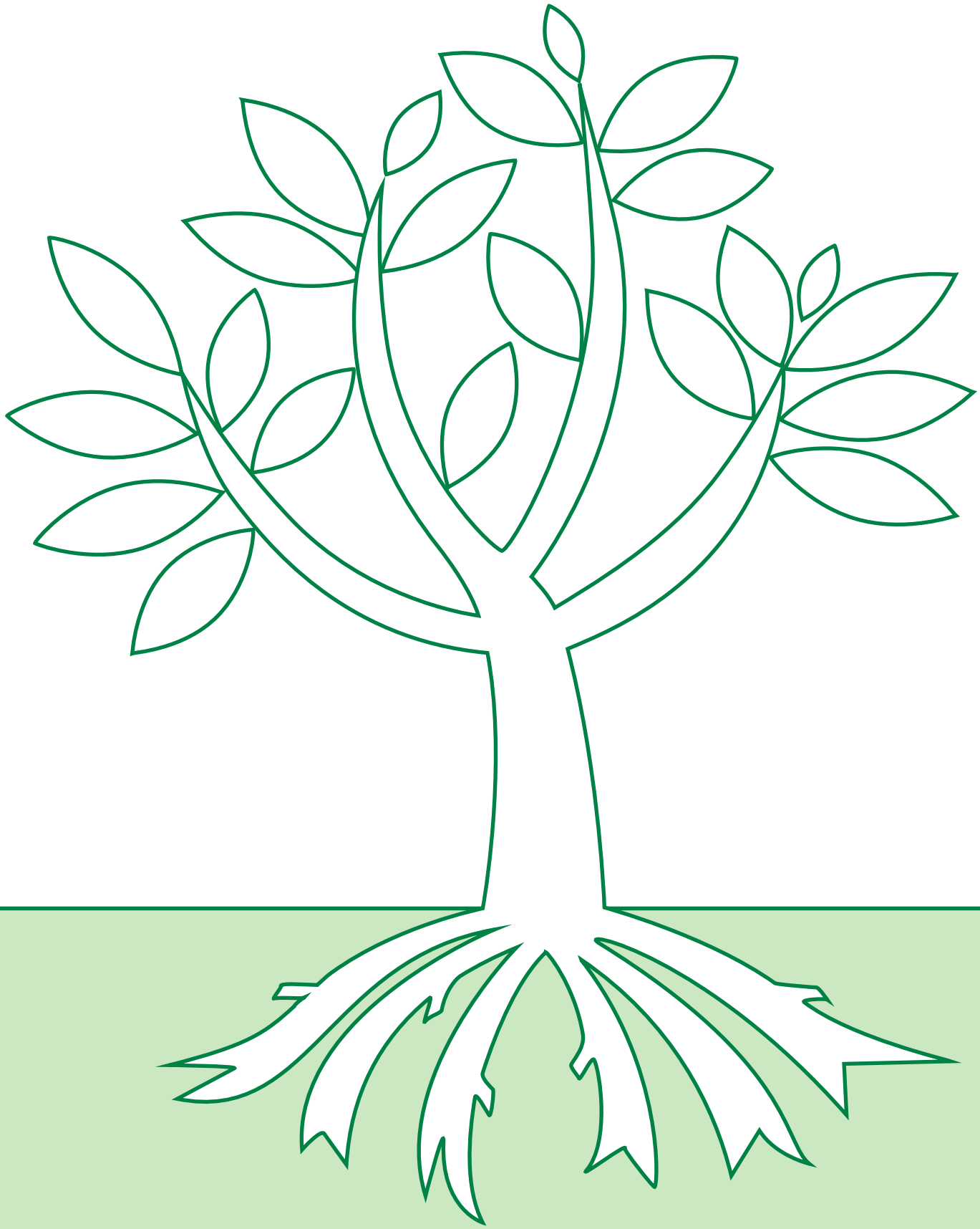
Young people may be fearful of raising concerns, particularly if family violence or other abuse is occurring. If young people disclose or otherwise seek help, they may request confidentiality. It is helpful to explain the difference between privacy and confidentiality, and to reassure students that their information will be shared with the appropriate parties 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 exchanging their information (if safe, reasonable and appropriate to do so), under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS), consent is never required.

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** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/privacy-information-sharing/policy.

Staff can also access further information about the **CISS and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/information-sharing-schemes/policy via the PAL.

Problem-solving tree



Social problem-solving scenarios

The problem: I feel used and I want it to stop

Medika is sick of the way her friends always ask to use her study notes. It's never a two-way thing, as no one ever offers to help her. It's like her friends get to go out and have a good time, while she does all the hard work. She wants to tell them that she won't be sharing her notes anymore, but so far, she hasn't managed to do this.

The problem: I want to ask someone out, but I am too scared to ask

Jo has liked Abdul for a long time. They keep intending to ask Abdul if the interest might be mutual. But their anxiety about starting a relationship always gets in the way and Jo has never ended up being the one who initiates this conversation.

The problem: I am falling behind with my study

Hakim is stressed because he's falling behind with his study. Exams are coming up. He still has overdue assignments and hasn't started making study notes. He has a regular evening shift on both weekend nights and also has to fit in basketball on Wednesday nights.

The problem: Feeling unsafe at the after party

Marli arrives at the afterparty following the Year 12 formal. She thought she'd know everyone, and it would be safe, but she finds herself surrounded by a group of drunk guys from another school. Her close friends are nowhere to be seen and a person she doesn't know keeps trying to hit on her.

The problem: They won't listen to my concerns

The Year 12 social committee has organised a disco themed formal that features strobe lights. Hikari is autistic and is worried that they won't be able to go because they'll feel overwhelmed by the noise and intensity. When their friend Jinnali tries to point this out to the committee, they're dismissive and show no interest in providing an alternative space or a sensory break space, even when Jinnali points out that it might also be helpful for their friend Ava who has epileptic seizures triggered by strobe lighting.

The problem: No one takes action about the toxic posts

People are getting uncomfortable about the stuff that Pedro is posting on social media, particularly the comments he makes about his sexual relationships and his comments about people's bodies. It's causing distress for a number of people across the year level, but no one will call him out on it.

The problem: I don't know how to tell my parents

Akiko and Leila often talked about when and how to tell their parents that they were in a serious relationship. Akiko had already come out at home, and her parents were supportive, but Leila hadn't raised the issue. It was complicated for her because same-gender relationships were not accepted within the religious tradition her family followed and she didn't really know her parents' stance on the matter. She wanted to continue her relationship with Akiko but was also worried her family might reject or condemn her. Akiko started encouraging her to tell her parents, because when she had met them, they seemed to like her. They were also going to be partners at the school formal, so their relationship was about to become quite public. Leila's parents might feel quite hurt or disrespected if they found out from a source other than their own daughter. Leila agreed she should raise the issue but said she just couldn't work out how to start the conversation with her parents.

Option: Devise a scenario where the character or characters are faced with a problem relating to competing priorities or social pressures.

Reflecting on everyday practise

- What kind of strategies do you use to help students think through how they will approach challenging tasks?
- What do you do to help students to identify the kinds of student self-talk that can lead to procrastination or can undermine the confidence to start a task or present work for assessment?
- How do you work on your own negative self-talk when it intrudes?
- Consider your style of listening and responding when others come to you with a problem. Would you describe yourself as an 'active listener'? Do you respond with strengths-based prompts?

Talking further

Encourage students to:

- practise active listening and positive or technical self-talk in relation to their school, family and social situations
- talk with friends and family about the ways they motivate themselves when they get stuck, lose confidence or face a big challenge
- try using assertive 'I' statements in situations where they want other people to understand their feelings, needs, boundaries or preferences.

Optional game

The Mirror Game works well to raise topic-related themes like empathy and consideration of the other. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.



Topic 04 Understanding gender, identity and respect

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- advance their awareness of the ways gender norms and associated power relations may play out in schools, homes, workplaces and leisure settings, as well as in social media environments
- engage critically with the ways dominant gender norms can influence attitudes, practises and behaviour
- identify common patterns of gender-based discrimination that occur in society
- identify ways that gender norms can influence intimate interactions and relationships, and conversations about consent
- develop communication strategies for conducting respectful consent conversations
- engage critically with the concepts of respect, recognition, and inclusion in relation to diversity.

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

Cross-national research studies have found that key drivers of gender-based violence at a population level include gender-inequitable social norms, and gender-inequitable or violence-endorsing constructions of masculinity. Drivers at a family level include poverty, a low level of education, childhood abuse, alcohol abuse, attitudes condoning violence and exposure to harsh or violent parenting. [21] An Australian study showed that the strongest predictors of attitudes supportive of violence against women held by young people aged 16 to 24 were holding attitudes that endorse gender inequality; having a low level of understanding of violence against women; holding prejudicial attitudes towards others on the basis of their disability, ethnicity, Aboriginality or sexual orientation; and generally endorsing violence as a practise. [22]

Australian data shows that the majority of young Australians do not find violence and sexual harassment to be acceptable. However, there are low levels of knowledge about how to prevent, help-seek or intervene in situations of gender-based violence. This highlights a critical need to teach young people about the existence, causes and consequences of gender inequality. This includes teaching about privilege.

Privilege refers to automatic unearned benefits given to members of dominant groups based on social identity. While students may be familiar with the notion of disadvantage, privilege can be harder for them to see. People who possess privilege may grow up believing they have earned or deserved their advantaged position in life, while believing that those less well-off have brought their disadvantage upon themselves. Others may accept their privilege as the norm and never notice the advantages it affords them or become aware that others do not have the same advantages. Theorists

argue that rather than being earned, privilege is something that is awarded to a person based on characteristics such as gender, socio-economic class, location or ethnicity. [104] For example, being born male brings certain advantages – such as being overly represented in the public sphere. Programs teaching about gender identity and positive gender relationships should build an awareness of the existence of different kinds of privilege and the intersecting ways disadvantage and marginalisation are associated with higher rates of gender-based violence.

Research shows that effective gender education, consent education and violence-prevention programs teach students about the relationship between gender and power and seek to foster gender-equitable and egalitarian relations between people. [22] This highlights a critical need to teach young people about the existence, causes and consequences of gender inequality and associated misuse of power and privilege within relationships.

An inclusive or 'gender-complex' approach can be used to challenge those forms of oppression and disadvantage which arise from gender norms, as well as those that arise in response to the gender binary. [23] A binary consists of two things or can refer to one of a pair of things. When talking about genders, binary genders are male and female, and non-binary genders are any genders that are not just male or female, or aren't male or female at all. [9]

In the past, it was common for educators to employ 'gender stereotypical' approaches which replicated the gender binary and associated expectations by assigning different roles and opportunities for girls and boys. As gender equality movements drew attention to the importance of equal opportunities for males and females, it was not uncommon for teachers to seek a gender 'free' or 'gender-blind' approach where teachers sought to be fair by 'ignoring' gender. However, with this approach, dominant patterns tended to persist because there was no opportunity to overtly challenge and address barriers and practises that led to inequality.

Subsequently, 'gender-sensitive' approaches were developed. Gender-sensitive approaches allow teachers to devise differential strategies to counteract inequity. However, this approach tends to continue to function within a gender binary, and this may mean that people of diverse gender or sexuality are still not included, and continue to experience inequality, including a denial of their existence. To address this, a 'gender-complex' approach can be used. Within a 'gender-complex' approach, a teacher employs strategies from a gender-sensitive approach but becomes additionally alert to the ways heteronormative and binary male/female classifications can work to exclude, pathologise or problematise those who do not fit neatly within these membership categories. To interrupt this trend, they use inclusive approaches which offer recognition, normalisation and respect. [23]

Topic 04

Activity 1: Rights, respect and inclusion – how fair is our nation?

Informed by the evidence base

Ecological models have been widely used in wellbeing research as they help with recognition of the structural and social determinants of wellbeing as well as interpersonal, familial and school-based influences. [23] They emphasise the interconnectedness between individual, family, school and community, as well as institutional and ideological influences on wellbeing. [24] They also recognise the ways in which historical, structural, technological and institutional factors influence gender norms, wellbeing and life outcomes. In individualistic societies, people tend to focus less on the ways in which forms of structural and social advantage influence life outcomes. There can be a tendency to blame those who are disadvantaged for the challenges that they encounter, and to presume that those who are advantaged are 'deserving' and have earnt their relative advantages (meritocracy). [25] In order to fully respect rights, it's important to understand the tendency in societies for the rights and preferences of the privileged to override the rights of those who are marginalised or disadvantaged. [26] Scholars addressing social justice and prevention of racism and gender-based violence note the importance of critical engagement with the ways in which historical and cultural forms of discrimination and oppression continue to affect lives in the present day. [27] They advocate use of pedagogical methods which develop a sense of shared compassion and collective responsibility for advancing social justice [28].

The high rates of mental health problems among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are a result of many intersecting and intergenerational forms of violence, oppression and disadvantage that commenced during colonisation. This pattern is also evident among the Indigenous peoples of other colonised countries. [29] It is well recognised in public health research that exposure to racism, poverty and other forms of social exclusion lead to higher rates of mental health distress. [30] For Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, historical and ongoing trauma and loss, and the experience of racism and stigma also continue to negatively affect their social and emotional wellbeing. [29]

In response, Aboriginal psychologists and academics have argued that it is important for education and health providers to recognise the holistic way Aboriginal people experience social and emotional wellbeing. To guide these efforts, they have provided a comprehensive framework, which describes the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people as experienced via 7 interconnecting dimensions. These dimensions comprise the connections to body; to mind and emotions; to family and kinship; to community; to culture; to Country; and to spirit, spirituality and ancestors. The model also identifies the ongoing influence of the social, political, historical and cultural determinants of wellbeing. The authors of this framework also explain that the foundational assumptions that underpin this model include that health is holistic; self-determination is a right; kinship is central; Aboriginal cultures are diverse; human rights are respected; cultural understanding is essential; and that Aboriginal strengths are acknowledged. [31]

This framework has been used as the centre point of many policies and strategic plans developed by governments and other organisations around Australia to advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing, including Balit Murrup (strong spirit), the Victorian Government's strategic focus improving the social and emotional wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal people in Victoria. [32] The model can also provide guidance for educators who seek to understand how they can support the wellbeing and learning of Aboriginal students and staff.

Determinants of social and emotional wellbeing

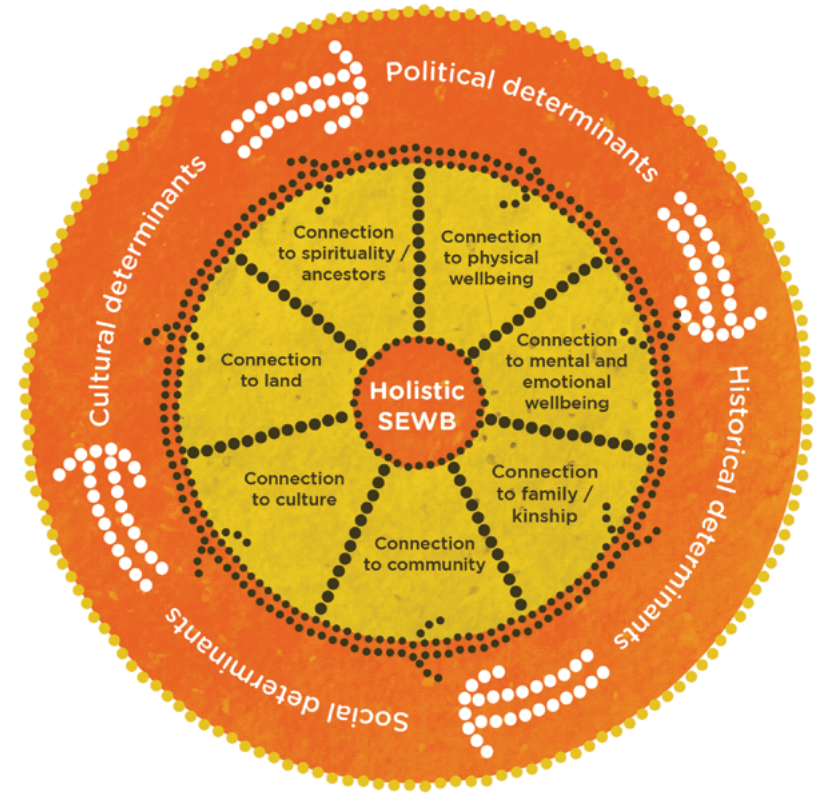


Figure 1 presents the dimensions of Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing which are:

- connection to spirit, spirituality and ancestors
- connection to land
- connection to culture
- connection to community
- connection to family and kinship
- connection to mind and emotions
- connection to body

The outer ring shows the determining influence of social, political, historical and cultural factors on social and emotional wellbeing.

Artist: Tristian Schultz, RelativeCreative.
Reference: Gee, Dudgeon, Schultz, Hart & Kelly 2013 on behalf of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association

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 critically engage with the concepts of respect, recognition and inclusion in relation to diversity within school and workplace settings.
- Students will discuss data identifying the patterns of discrimination that continue to affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability and LGBTIQA+ people.
- Students will discuss ways to show respect for diversity within their relationships.

Equipment

- 'Discrimination data' cards
- Access to tools for digital media display

Coaching point:
Learning from Aboriginal perspectives. Books and resources authored 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. [33] 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 which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples held across Australia prior to invasion, colonisation and Federation and still hold; the major events which have affected Koorie communities since colonisation; and the richness of the current living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

VAEAI website https://www.vaeai.org.au/resources/ also provides a range of downloadable curriculum and education resources, policies, strategies and other publications. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSI) has prepared a **guide to evaluating and selecting education resource** 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.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Part A: Respect is a big thing

1. Explain that this lesson will focus on what it takes to recognise, respect and relate well to others, despite diversity of cultures, backgrounds, identities or religions.

   To introduce the concept of 'dadirri' or deep listening, arrange for students to watch a 3-minute video in which Aboriginal elder, Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann (2021 Senior Australian of the Year) explains the concept. Dr Ungunmerr-Baumann is an Aboriginal elder from Naiuyu in the area of Daly River in the Northern Territory: https://youtu.be/tow2tR_ezL8?si=jPn8IM_CzQIRHB8q

   Invite students to share responses to the video:

   - What were some of the messages they got from the images, text and music?
   - Dr Ungunmerr-Baumann says, 'To listen deeply is to connect.' What might it take to listen deeply to someone else?
   - What part might respect for someone's culture play in listening?

2. Introduce the idea that there are two key ways that we use the word 'respect'. One is recognition-based respect which means that you give respect to other people just because they are people and worthy of respect. The second is esteem-respect such as when you admire or look up to someone in response to what they are like, what they do or what they accomplish. The concept of human rights is based on recognition-based respect. Historically, without this kind of respect, people are not given their rights. (Definition derived from the work of Steven Darwall. [34]

3. Pose the questions: 'What advice would you give to someone about how to show respect within relationships with those from different cultures or religion? What would you recommend as dos and don'ts?'

4. Arrange for groups to discuss and report back.

   - Don'ts might include: don't assume, ignore, disregard, exclude, stereotype, judge, demonise, pathologise, patronise, victimise.
   - Dos might include: do consult, listen, learn, watch, consider, think, ask, accept, affirm, value, celebrate, include, greet, acknowledge, apologise, thank.

5. Introduce the idea that one form of recognition-based disrespect is called 'erasure'. Erasure is the opposite of recognition. Based on the meaning of erase to rub out erasure is when people fail to recognise the existence of certain groups. They are left out of the story. For example, earlier accounts of Australian history erased the 65,000+ years of Aboriginal history and began the story when white people came to the land. Another example of erasure occurred when LGBTIQA+ people were left out of the story or told they should not exist. [35] For example, being left out of histories and policies and being punished and discriminated against in laws.

6. Ask students to suggest what the effect on people may be when the institutions, or societies that they live within erase their existence, ignore them or leave them out of the story or the process of decision-making about things that affect them.

Part B: How fair is our country?

1. 'Advance Australia fair' is our national anthem, replacing earlier use of 'God save the Queen/King' but how fair is our country, when we think of equality and respect? Ask students to each give Australia a score out of 10 to show their view as to how fair Australia is in terms of treating all people with respect, regardless of diversity (with a high score equal to high levels of respect).

2. Explain that in Australia we have a number of reliable sources of data which assists us to see whether people from marginalised communities experience discrimination in settings like workplaces, schools, communities and online.

3. Arrange students into groups and give each group 2 or 3 of the data cards. Ask them to discuss their data with their group, and prepare to inform the class about what their data is saying about the presence of discrimination in Australian society.

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' on an as-needed basis including 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 mathematical data.

4. Arrange for groups to report back. Lead a discussion about whether this data has led them to change their fairness score, or not. Ask students whether they think it is enough to follow the 'do's and don'ts' they have previously identified in order to achieve respect and recognition for all, or is there a further need for policies, laws and community engagement.

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 the dislike of, contempt for, prejudice against or distrust of women.

Sexism: is showing prejudice or discrimination based on someone's gender or sex 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 the fear or intolerance of people who identify as or are presumed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or same-sex attracted.

Transphobia: is the harmful, unfair or discriminatory treatment of people who are transgender or gender diverse.

Xenophobia: is the dislike of, or prejudice against people from other countries.

Hate speech: is contemptuous or demeaning treatment of an individual or group because of their real or perceived identity factors, like their gender, colour, religion, sexuality, ethnicity or nationality.

5. Point out that people who are members of more than one marginalised group tend to face even greater likelihood of discrimination and victimisation. For example a woman with disability is more likely to face violence, than a woman without disability. A woman of colour, who also has a disability is even more likely to face discrimination, than a white woman without a disability. This phenomenon is called 'intersectionality'. The term reminds us that forms of disadvantage intersect and accumulate.
6. Acknowledge that we have laws designed to protect people's rights to freedom from discrimination. These laws are designed to protect people's rights to freedom from discrimination in workplaces, community organisations and schools. It is important for people to be aware of people's rights under these laws, particularly as they enter workplaces.

Some useful laws to know:

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of a protected personal characteristic in an area of public life. It also makes it against the law 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) 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 their 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 pregnancy and breastfeeding. This legislation also makes sexual harassment against the law.

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 victim blaming in situations of discrimination or violence.

Part C: Respect and inclusion at work

1. Acknowledge that many students are already in the paid workforce in their senior secondary school years. Invite a show of hands to identify who is or already has been a member of the paid workforce.
2. Identify the importance of respect and inclusion in the workplace. Acknowledge that while discrimination sometimes takes subtle forms, it remains harmful because it affects wellbeing, participation and opportunity.

   If time allows, show students a video clip which illustrates the subtle ways that people experience discrimination or lack of inclusion of diversity in their workplaces. The 4-minute video **'When more people speak up, more people listen'** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1nJqpqgzR0 created by RBC (one of Canada's largest banks) provides accounts from a range of workers.

   Alternatively, view the 2-minute video **'Stand up, speak up**' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJvJAyZnAqA created by Deloitte (a large British-owned multinational company, providing professional services in the areas of finance, accounting and tax) to remind staff that it's up to all of us to be allies.
3. Invite student responses to the video or videos. Encourage them to name the different forms of discrimination that were represented. Lead a discussion by asking:
   - Are these similar or different in any way to discriminatory actions you have observed happening within institutions you have been part of, including schools, workplaces, sports clubs and online communities?
   - Are there any key messages in these videos that you see as relevant to life in secondary schools?
   - What does it take to speak up as an ally and call out discriminatory behaviour in the school setting?
   - Might there be any additional barriers or drivers to speaking up in a workplace setting?
4. To end the lesson with a positive example of what can happen when workplaces actively seek to learn from Aboriginal perspectives and knowledges, provide opportunity for students to watch a Parks Victoria 4.5-minute video **'Connection to Country'** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdP4p1z1_JA. In this video Aboriginal park rangers share their experiences of caring for Country as part of their work.

   Invite students to respond to the video by talking with a partner, small group or with the class about some of the ways they use places, spaces or environments as a source of wellbeing, refuge or belonging.

Review

Invite students to comment on how the learning activities have helped them to think critically about the importance of inclusion, respect and recognition and the ways discrimination influences access to rights and to wellbeing in schools, homes, workplaces, services and social, recreation or public spaces.

Coaching point:
Why it is better to intervene than to ignore student use 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. In contrast, students are less likely to use hate speech if their peers or teachers call it out as unacceptable. [36] 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.

Coaching point:
Responding to student use of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. Uses of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech call for different responses from a teacher. If students repeat misinformation (for example, offering misogynistic, racist, sexist, ableist or 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, follow up after class.

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

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. Respond to the actions as a form of violence. Useful steps commonly used by teachers to respond to other serious behaviours include:

1. Interrupt the student or students 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 (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' or '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')

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 has happened elsewhere and follow up with 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.

Restorative approaches require a 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. [37] If the possibility of revictimisation is high, more sustained educative approaches may be needed in the lead-up to restorative conversations between the parties.

For further advice on use of strategies to support positive behaviour see the student behaviour resources on the Department of Education website.

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

- 13 February: National Apology Day, anniversary of the apology for past government policies and practises relating to the Stolen Generations (13 February 2008)
- 26 May: National Sorry Day, commemorating the Stolen Generations
- 27 May - 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 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 signing of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on Thursday, 13 September 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.

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 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. This may include involving a Koorie Engagement Support Officer or making use of the Department of Education's interpreting and translation services.

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 [38].

See 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. [39]

Common Ground's website https://www.commonground.org.au/article/what-is-country contains additional information about the importance of Country.

Discrimination data cards

Question 1: What do young Australians aged 15 to 19 years perceive to be the top 3 reasons for people being treated unfairly in this country?

Answer: According to the 15- to 19-year-olds, the top 3 reasons for people being treated unfairly in Australia were seen to be gender (38.6%), race or cultural background (31.3%) and mental health (28.9%).

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

Question 2: Which community groups are most likely to experience discrimination in the workplace?

Answer: The Diversity Council of Australia's research on inclusion at work showed that 59% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers are experiencing discrimination and/or harassment in the workplace, a 9% increase since 2021.

By comparison, non-Indigenous respondents reported a small drop in levels of discrimination and harassment, with 22% reporting this type of exclusion in 2023 compared with 23% in 2021.

Source: Diversity Council Australia, (2023) First Nations facing increased discrimination & cultural load (press release):

https://www.dca.org.au/news/media-releases/first-nations-facing-increased-discrimination#:~:text=Early%20data%20from%20Dca's%20upcoming,our%20last%20Inclusion%40Work%20Index

Question 3: Which community groups are more likely to experience hate speech online?

Answer: In 2019 the Australian eSafety Commissioner surveyed adults aged 18 to 65. They asked about hate speech online [40]. They found that:

- 1 in 7 (14%) had been the target of online hate speech in the prior 12 months.
- people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (32%) and as LGBTIQ (30%) experienced online hate speech at more than double the national average.

Source: esafety (2019) Online Hate speech: findings from Australia, New Zealand and Europe: https://www.esafety.gov.au/research/online-hate-speech

Question 4: What proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers reported they were sometimes, often or always being ignored by people at work or being treated as if they didn't exist?

Answer: 50% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers reported they were sometimes, often or always being ignored by people at work or being treated as if they didn't exist (compared to 24% of non-Indigenous workers).

Source: Diversity Council Australia (O'Leary, J. and D'Almada-Remedios, R.) DCA Inclusion@Work Index 2021-2022: Mapping the State of Inclusion in the Australian Workforce, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2021.

https://www.dca.org.au/research/inclusion-at-work-index

Source of 2023 data:

https://www.dca.org.au/news/media-releases/first-nations-facing-increased-discrimination#:~:text=Early%20data%20from%20DCA's%20upcoming,our%20last%20Inclusion%40Work%20Index

Discrimination data cards

Question 5: What proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers reported sometimes, often or always being left out of a work social gathering?

Answer: 49% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers reported sometimes, often or always being left out of a work social gathering (compared to 23% of non-Indigenous workers).

Source: Diversity Council Australia (O'Leary, J. and D'Almada-Remedios, R.) DCA Inclusion@Work Index 2021–2022: Mapping the State of Inclusion in the Australian Workforce, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2021.

https://www.dca.org.au/research/inclusion-at-work-index

Source of 2023 data:

https://www.dca.org.au/news/media-releases/first-nations-facing-increased-discrimination#:~:text=Early%20data%20from%20DCA's%20upcoming,our%20last%20Inclusion%40Work%20Index

Question 6: How common is it for people to observe harassment of people of diverse sexualities or genders at school?

Answer: 54% of surveyed 13- to 18-year-old Australian students report witnessing verbal harassment of gender and sexuality diverse students at school.

Source: Ullman, J. (2021), Free to Be...Yet?: The second national study of Australian high school students who identify as gender and sexuality diverse. Centre for Educational Research, School of Education, Western Sydney University, Penrith.

Question 7: Are people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual more likely to experience discrimination than those who identify as heterosexual?

Answer: Yes. People who described themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual were more likely to report experiencing discrimination (30%) than people who described themselves as heterosexual (13%).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020), General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, ABS Website, accessed 10 October 2023.

Question 8: Are people with a mental health condition more likely to experience discrimination than those without?

Answer: Yes. One in 5 (21%) people with a mental health condition reported having experienced some form of discrimination, compared to 12% of people without a mental health condition.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020), General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, ABS Website, accessed 10 October 2023.

Question 9: Are people with a disability more likely to experience discrimination than those without?

Answer: Yes. People with disability were more likely to report having experienced discrimination (16%) compared to those with no disability (12%).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020), General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, ABS Website, accessed 10 October 2023.

Discrimination data cards

Question 10: What proportion of Australians aged 15 to 19 years hold cultural and/or spiritual beliefs?

Answer: Data collected from Australians aged 15 to 19 years showed that 1 in 5 (20.2%) young people said they have both cultural and spiritual beliefs, another 1 in 5 (20.2%) reported just spiritual beliefs and 1 in 10 (10.3%) held just cultural beliefs. The remainder (49.3%) said they had no beliefs. [4]

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

Question 11: What percentage of migrant and refugee women experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 5 years in Australia?

Answer: 68% of migrant and refugee women had experienced sexual harassment in the last 5 years in Australia, and just under half (46%) of those surveyed had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 5 years, mostly by men in senior positions in their workplace.

Source: Segrave, M., Wickes, R., Keel, C., & Tan, S. J. (2023). *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: A study of sexual harassment in the workplace* (Research report, 06/2023). ANROWS. https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/migrant-and-refugee-women-in-australia-a-study-of-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/

Question 12: What were the most common forms of sexual harassment experienced by the 46% of migrant and refugee women who experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 5 years in Australia?

Answer: The two most common forms of sexual harassment were indecent phone calls or messages of a sexual nature (71%), and sexually suggestive comments or jokes (53%) (mostly perpetrated by men in senior positions in the workplace.) Most of the women were in professional roles. Most of the women in the study (74%) had bachelor degrees or higher and the majority were in professional employment (48%), followed by technicians and trade workers (15%) and clerical and administrative workers (11%).

Source: Segrave, M., Wickes, R., Keel, C., & Tan, S. J. (2023). *Migrant and refugee women in Australia: A study of sexual harassment in the workplace* (Research report, 06/2023). ANROWS. https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/migrant-and-refugee-women-in-australia-a-study-of-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/

Question 13: In Australia, are women who are ethnically diverse more likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace?

Answer: This kind of data is not collected often, but a 2018 Australian study of working women under 40 found that Asian-born women and culturally and linguistically diverse women (based on the indicator of 'language spoken at home') were twice as likely to have experienced workplace sexual harassment than other women.

Source: Baird, M., Cooper, R., Hill, E., Probyn, E., & Vromen, A. (2018). Women and the future of work: Report 1 of The Australian Women's Working Futures Project. University of Sydney. https://doi.org/10.25910/5db0ef76585d1

Topic 04

Activity 2: Exploring gender stereotypes

Informed by the evidence base

Beliefs about gender norms and roles are socially constructed. That is, the types of behaviours considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their gender are created by societies [41]. Gender norms include attitudes about what it means to act, speak, dress and express oneself as a member of a gender category as well as attitudes about how to treat others. Children learn these norms and expectations from an early age and this influences the roles, attitudes and behaviours they adopt. [42-46] Dominant norms around masculinity can lead to normalisation of some forms of violence. [47]

People absorb gender expectations from many sources, including parents, friends, teachers, institutions and the media. [48] Many of these gender norms can lead to harmful or limiting outcomes. For example, gender beliefs related to masculinity may include the denial of vulnerability or weakness, high expectations in relation to emotional suppression and physical dominance, a belief in the acceptability of violence and presumptions about sexual entitlement. These gender norms can lead to higher rates of risky behaviour involving alcohol use or unsafe driving, as well as higher rates of violence towards women. Gender norms related to femininity and pressures to meet expected beauty standards can lead to augmented rates of body image distress and to higher rates of mental health problems. The impact of gender norms is illustrated in morbidity and mortality data which shows different health and illness patterns for men and women. Research shows that socially dominant stereotypes of masculinity play a direct role in driving men's violence against women and that discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people can lead to poor mental health and much higher suicide rates among those affected. [49-52] The data tells us that males are most commonly the perpetrators of family, domestic and sexual violence and women and gender and sexually diverse people are most commonly the victims. [53]

Within a heteronormative model of understanding, gender is presumed to exist in a neat binary of male/female. The inequities associated with this binary have now been recognised, for example the privileging of men and the inequitable treatment of women. [54] Along with the importance of disrupting limiting gender norms and inequities, people have become increasingly aware that it is also important to dislodge the gender bias and inequities associated with assumptions that all people will identify with the gender assigned them at birth, or with the concept that people should identify with one or other position within a clear binary of male/female. Research shows that many people are aware of both their gender identity and their sexual orientation from an early age. Research conducted in Australia finds that half of young people who are same-sex or same-gender attracted will know before age 12. [55] Gender-diverse young people are also likely to know from a young age that their gender is different to what has been presumed for them, even though they may not communicate this to others until late adolescence or adulthood. [56] A national study conducted into the wellbeing of trans young people in Australia found that more than half of trans young people were 13 or younger when their parents realised they were trans, or when the young person came out to their parents. [56] Young people benefit from education programs which provide them the opportunity to consider and question the ways gender norms may lead to negative or limiting outcomes, or to forms of oppression associated with discrimination, erasure or exclusion. [57, 58]

Learning intentions

- Students will analyse the ways binary gender norms and stereotypes have persisted and changed over time.
- Students will develop their gender literacy by engaging with the meanings of key terms used to signify difference in gender identity.
- Students will detect and describe the way confining gender norms relating to masculinities and femininities operate through various cultural mediums like literature, media and popular culture, as well as through the material world in terms of things (clothing, objects, bodies) and spaces (events, places).
- Students will consider ways a gender-binary model works to exclude people of diverse genders.
- Students will discuss ways to show respect for diversity.

Equipment

- Room to move

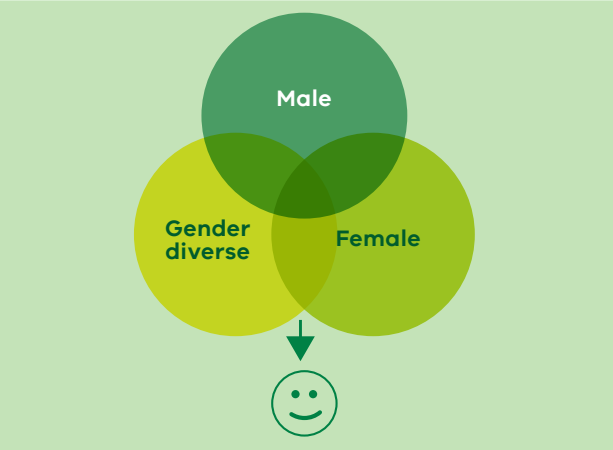
Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Provide content advice by informing students that in this session there will be a focus on gender stereotypes, gender diversity and the effects of gender norms on mental health and body image. Students can access support or alternative participation options if this is appropriate for them. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.
2. Ask students what they understand the word 'stereotype' to mean. Elicit some examples. Prompt for examples of stereotypes that pertain to gender.

> A stereotype is a generalisation used to describe members of group. Stereotypes are commonly oversimplified and exaggerated, are potentially offensive and can lead to unintentional or intentional discrimination. They are often used in advertising as they conjure rapid recognition and may also be found throughout media and literature.

3. Explain that students are about to demonstrate their knowledge of gender stereotypes by collectively constructing what might be found in a 'museum of gender'. In this museum, statues are assembled which show depictions of gender across time. To create this museum, you will ask students to freeze in two dramatic poses or 'statues' that conjure the gendered image that comes to mind for them from two different historical periods. 'Gallery 1' will house gendered statues representing humanity from the 18th to 20th century and 'gallery 2' will house gendered statues representing humanity in the 21st century. Explain that students will present their statue from gallery 1 first, followed by gallery 2. Model some examples to demonstrate.
4. To assist students to form a mental picture of their two statues, explain that on the count of 3, you will clap, and this will be the signal to form and hold the statue pose of their historical representation of gender.
5. Arrange for one half of the class to drop their pose, so they can view the gallery of gender statues created by the rest of the class. Invite them to 'read aloud' what they notice is communicated about gender norms and gender roles through the bodies and the poses adopted. A statue can be tapped to ask who or what they represent. Then reverse, so the first group gets to view and read the images created by the other half of the class.
6. Repeat the process to display the statues representing gender in the 21st century.



7. Ask students to report on what they noticed within and between the two readings. Ask students to comment on any patterns:
    - Were there consistent messages or replications among the poses of others? What were they? Talk about the ways these responses articulate common stereotypes.
    - What kinds of images were common? What were the bodies doing, signalling or showing?
- What suggestions did these statues make about the gender norms related to masculinity and femininity?
- Did we represent diverse genders and sexualities? Why might these categories have been sparsely represented or been left

invisible (if that was what happened)? What effects might this have on our understanding of history? What impact might this have on people of diverse genders and sexualities?

- Did the nature of the stereotypes in the gender statues seem to change much over time? If so, in what ways? What are some of the gender norms and expectations that you think may have changed over time, even if we did not capture this in our statues?

Coaching point:
Using embodied approaches. The 'museum of gender' statues offer a playful and embodied approach through which to identify knowledge of dominant stereotypes and through which to critically engage with the ways certain patterns persist over time, while others may shift or change. Use of the statues helps to emphasise the embodied nature of gender.

8. Refresh some of the key language that is used to talk about gender. Explain that 'boy/man' and 'girl/woman' have been defined as the two dominant and binary gender identities. These are known as 'cisgender' categories.

   The term 'cisgender' describes people whose experiences of their own gender align with the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, if they were born with male body parts and feel like a boy or a man. For a transgender person who feels like they are really a girl or a woman or diverse in their gender, this categorisation of boy or man, or cisgender, isn't right for them. The term cisgender began to be used as people became more aware of the need to name the groups who are privileged by being born into this dominant binary gender model; and through the need to disrupt the presumption that 'man' and 'woman' are the only two gender categories available.

9. Refresh use of the terms describing those of diverse gender identities – for example, transgender, gender diverse or gender fluid. These terms are used to denote when a person's gender identity does not fit with the biological sex assigned to them at birth. Terms like transgender, gender fluid, gender diverse and gender queer are also used to describe those who self-identify outside the dominant gender binary, those who challenge the applicability of this binary and those who may move fluidly between categories, or find they belong to a different category to that initially assigned to them.

10. Explain that the term 'intersex' is an umbrella term that refers to sex, not gender. It is used to refer to those people who are born with a combination of genetic, hormonal or physical sex characteristics that do not fit within typical binary notions of male or female bodies. These differences may be noted at birth, or later in life – for example, during puberty or when people are trying to conceive. The term 'intersex' is an umbrella term as intersex traits include a very wide range of different underlying variations in people's bodies. Intersex is a physical difference occurring naturally in the human population.

11. Remind students that all of these categories of gender identity are separate from sexuality. Sexuality refers to a person's sexual desires, which can also be diverse. The term 'asexual' is used to describe a person who does not experience sexual attraction but may experience romantic attraction towards others. The term 'pansexual' is used to describe a person who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of all genders, binary or non-binary. The word 'heterosexual' or 'straight' is used to refer to a person who is attracted to people of the opposite gender to themselves. The word 'bisexual' is used to describe a person who person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of their own gender and other genders. The words 'homosexual', 'gay' and 'lesbian' have been used to describe a person who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same sex and/or gender as themselves. Unfortunately, over time some of these words have also been used negatively, as slurs and as the basis to criminalise or discriminate against people. In response, some people find the term 'homosexual' offensive and prefer to use the term 'gay' or 'queer'. Language continues to evolve and it is respectful to use the terms chosen by the person themselves.

12. Point out that regardless of whether people identify as cisgender, transgender or gender diverse, they will be influenced and affected by the gender norms of their society. They may be treated in certain ways as a result of society's gender norms, they may make efforts to fit with norms ascribed to the gender category they identify with and they may be negatively policed by others if they fail to follow dominant gender norms. The more marginalised someone is, the more likely they are to be harshly or violently policed in relation to their performance of gender. Hence, as well as knowing that women experience much higher rates of gender-based violence than men, we also know that people who are gender diverse experience high rates of discrimination and interpersonal violence and that people who are sexually diverse also experience higher rates of discrimination and violence.

13. Explain that the focus of the next activity is going to be on noting how gender norms might be at work in shaping people's ideas about who they can or should be and what is acceptable or unacceptable for them to do by revisiting the ways they can be detected at work in a children's tale.

14. Provide the fairy story of 'Cinderella' as a collectively worked example. Call on class members to sketch in key elements of the storyline and its characters. Alternatively, stories like 'Sleeping Beauty', 'Snow White' or 'Rapunzel' would all work in similar ways for this purpose.

Story snapshot:

In 'Cinderella', following the death of her mother, two ugly stepsisters and a nasty stepmother take advantage of the (beautiful) Cinderella and treat her as their servant. The prince is holding a ball to select his future bride. The stepsisters put on fine clothes and attend, hoping to be chosen, but Cinderella can't go as she is too poor and oppressed to own the right clothes. After the stepsisters have departed, a fairy godmother arrives and magically transforms Cinderella into a beautiful dress, including glass slippers for her petite feet and a carriage transports her to the ball. At the ball, the prince falls for her beauty and dances with her. But the magic runs out at midnight, when she flees, losing a glass slipper on the way. The prince seeks the owner of the slipper in hope of finding the beautiful Cinderella. The ugly sisters try the shoe, but their feet are too big. When lowly servant Cinderella tries the shoe, it fits and despite her servant status, she is revealed as the beauty he seeks. He marries her and she becomes his princess.

15. Ask the class to comment on the gender norms shown to be at work in the story.
    - Who gets to do the rescuing?
    - Who needs to be rescued?
    - Who gets to play the active role in choosing a potential partner or spouse?
    - Which attributes contribute to women being identified as having greater value or worth?
    - Which attributes contribute to men being identified as having greater value or worth?
    - What power or influence is assigned to the man and the woman in the story?
    - Which genders are absent from the story?
    - What are the implicit messages about the worth of a person who is of lower or higher social class or wealth?
    - What implications are suggested about the relationship between beauty and virtue and ugliness and evil?
16. Once the story has been deconstructed, ask students to work in small groups to make comparisons with the ways gender roles or norms appear at work in well-known movies or TV series they are familiar with. Where do they see differences or similarities?
17. Arrange for groups to report back on their observations.
18. As a class, discuss which gender norms and societal attitudes might be at work in producing this Australian data.

Percentage of Victorian respondents aged 15-19 who were extremely or very concerned about:

- **mental health:** gender diverse 63%, males 17%; females 41%
- **body image:** gender diverse 45%; males 14%; females 39%.

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

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking which aspects of the learning activities were most useful in helping them to consider the way gender norms are shaped and performed individually and socially.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Inform students that in the next session the focus will be on how gender norms and expectations are perpetuated through the ways people 'police' or 'reward' the behaviour of others. This will include a focus on scenarios in which people put pressure on others to initiate sexual relationships or present their gender via particular modes of dress or behaviour.

Coaching point:
Using a gender-complex approach. This activity is informed by a gender-complex framework which seeks to acknowledge the diversity of gender membership categories. Nonetheless, it also highlights that the dominant binaries of masculine and feminine can influence people regardless of their membership category. Dominant gendered norms and discourses can shape how people are treated as well as the options that are made available to them. In turn these norms and associated storylines can be internalised and direct the work people do to fit and belong within the roles and categories available to them.

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 04

Activity 3: Performing gender, policing gender

Informed by the evidence base

Gendered norms and expectations contribute to the process of 'gender policing'. This term is used to describe the work that people do to enforce the dominant masculinities and femininities by governing or punishing those who challenge these norms. [59, 60] Gender policing can also be used to punish those who identify as gender diverse or of diverse sexuality. The cycle of gender policing can accelerate social anxiety about levels of acceptance within the peer group. This stress can be alleviated via use of learning activities that provide opportunity for young people to critique gender stereotypes and become aware of the ways certain gender norms work in harmful or limiting ways. [57, 58]

The development of empathy is pivotal in the prevention of discrimination and violence. Peers who have an empathetic engagement with the target of violence are more likely to proactively respond with acts of support or kindness. [61] Those with rights-affirming attitudes are less likely to engage in gender-based violence. [62, 63] Research suggests that it is important to equip bystanders to become upstanders who challenge the sexist, homophobic and transphobic attitudes and actions that can lead to forms of gender-based violence. [64] Effective learning activities focus on developing positive strategies for intervention and on advancing the skills needed to carry out these strategies within complex social contexts. [57, 58, 65]

Learning intentions

- Students will identify social practises through which people replicate gender norms by way of the pressures and expectations they place on others.
- Students will identify strategies they can use to challenge expectations associated with limiting or harmful gender norms.

Equipment

- 'Gender policing' scenarios
- Paper and pens or digital devices

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students that the focus of the next activity is going to be on how gender norms and expectations are reinforced through the ways people shame or reward the behaviour of others. This will include a focus on scenarios that deal with ways that people put pressure on others to engage in intimate relationships or to express their gender identity in particular ways. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

   'Gender policing' is a term used to describe the actions that people use to enforce gender norms and expectations and to control others' behaviour. It is where people send positive signals to those who fit these norms and negative signals to those who don't.

2. Build a shared understanding of what the term 'gender policing' might refer to. Invite students to provide some examples of what gender policing might look like or sound like when done to reward or govern others. Seek examples of forms of gender policing that may be enacted by peers of the same gender, peers of a different gender and members of an older generation.

   Possible examples:

   Gender policing by peers of the same gender:

   - Girls complimenting females on their appearance while making body shaming comments about their own or other's bodies.
   - Boys making fun of males who show excellence in poetry while applauding those who show sporting excellence

   Gender policing by members of older generation:

   - A grandparent buying dolls for their granddaughter and trucks for their grandson.
   - A parent encouraging their gender-questioning child to dress or behave more like someone of their ascribed gender.

3. Organise for students to work in small groups to develop responses to one or more of the gender policing scenarios. They will generate possible response strategies to deflect, interrupt or challenge the gender policing and/or to show support for someone who wants to make choices that don't fit a dominant gender norm. They should then devise an additional scenario which captures a gender policing practise they have observed within exchanges via social media and provide possible responses to challenge or deflect this practise.
4. Arrange for students to report back on their analysis and their suggested responses to the given and group-devised scenarios. Encourage them to comment on the effects of both subtle and overt forms of gender policing, like the implicit messaging transmitted via social media when people share images they have carefully filtered or selected to show the most attractive or successful versions of their narrative.

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.

5. Ask students to consider what strengths, logic and self-talk they can draw upon to deflect, interrupt or challenge the subtle and overt forms of gender policing they may encounter, either in person or on social media.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions and identify some of the strategies people suggested that can be used to resist or challenge limiting or harmful gender norms.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

6. Provide students with content advice. Inform students that in the upcoming sessions they will focus on consent. This means learning about consent and the law; looking at some scenarios to discuss whether consent has taken place in these situations and providing advice about how to have a respectful consent conversation in the scenarios where this did not happen. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

Coaching point:
Mixing students. Students may not be confident to mix across friendship groups and genders. Mix students into different pairs or groups so that they learn to work well with a range of people and gain confidence in crossing any friendship or gender divides that may be operative in the class. To randomly mix students, you could use one of these methods:

- **Name lotto:** Cut up a copy of the class roll and mix the names together in a box or hat. Then draw out 4 or 5 names at a time to create random groups.
- **Count off**: Count students off (depending on the number in your class) so that they end up with groups of 4 or 5 students (i.e. with 24 in the class you would count students off from 1 to 6, then start again. When you finish, ask all those who were 1s to form a group and so on).
- **Phone/tablet team sorting apps:** Students can be allocated randomly or sorted selectively ahead of time to support learning.
- **Interactive challenges:** For example, lining up in order of height or birth month or in alphabetical order of first or last name.

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.

Gender policing scenarios

Scenario 1: Nilam auditioned to join the choir. It was mostly girls who turned up. He got selected and soon found he loved the harmonising and the great team spirit in the choir. His friends started teasing him and calling him 'songbird' and making warbling noises at him. They seemed to find it hilarious whenever one of them called him that. When the rehearsals intensified in the lead-up to competitions, choir practise clashed with soccer training. His male friends started putting pressure on him to quit choir and stay with the soccer team.

- What kinds of gender policing are going on here?
- What strategies could fellow choir members use to show peer support?
- What strategies could other classmates show when they notice the sexist teasing going on?

Scenario 2: Walker and his friends were practising basketball at lunchtime while other students watched. Walker's friends know that he has a crush on Amalia. He wishes they didn't know, because they always make fun of him for not making a move on her and he wants to wait for the right time. They notice Amalia and her friends are watching. Some of Walker's friends start to pressure him to go and invite Amalia to watch him play in the finals tonight, saying it will impress her. He refuses, but they call out, 'Hey, Amalia, come here! Walker wants to talk to you!' She looks embarrassed but her friends laugh and push her onto the court anyway. Everyone is watching.

- What kinds of gender policing are going on here?
- What strategies could team members and friends use to interrupt the policing and show respect?

Scenario 3: Lulu (16) and Aranka (17) took heaps of selfies, at least 50 at a time, till they got one they liked. They kept trying to lend Chi (17) clothes and offering to help her with makeup and filters so she could finally take some good pics for her profile. They kept giving Chi tips on what to wear to make her look skinnier, and what she should wear to Aranka's 18th birthday party. When she joined the girls' football team, they kept warning Chi she would end up with ugly bruises.

- What kinds of gender policing are going on here?
- What strategies could fellow class members use to show peer support?
- What strategies could fellow members of the football team use when they notice the gender policing?

Scenario 4: Since affirming her gender as a woman and her affirmed pronouns as she/her, Maali (17) has found her friends and classmates supportive. However, her grandparents continue to use her dead name and pronoun, and don't apologise when she corrects them. They also continually tell her that they preferred it when she had short hair and they buy her clothing for birthday or Christmas which she passes on to her brother, because it doesn't reflect the way she wants to dress.

- What kinds of gender policing are going on here?
- What strategies could family members use to show support?
- What strategies could peers use when they hear from Maali about this form of gender policing?

Scenario 5: Tim (17) is in his bedroom with his two younger cousins, Nat (16) and Jason (15). Nat starts bragging that he has lots of nudes on his phone of girlfriends and some passed on to him by school mates. Nat asks Jason if he has any and puts him down when he says no. Nat urges Tim to give Jason some tips about how to score.

- What kinds of gender policing are going on here?
- What strategies could Tim use to interrupt or challenge this pressure?
- What effects might it have if he joins in with the bragging?

Scenario 6 : Create an additional scenario which reflects a gender policing practise (sent via discouragement or encouragement signals) that might be encountered on social media.

Then respond to it by answering the following questions:

- What kinds of gender policing are going on in this situation?
- What strategies could friends use to interrupt the policing and show respect and support the affected person to feel free to make choices that are right for them?

Topic 04

Activity 4: Gender norms and their influence on consent conversations

Informed by the evidence base

Teaching young people about consent is an important strategy within approaches to the prevention of sexual violence. [66] The concept of sexual consent applies not just to sexual intercourse but to all forms of sexual activity. A focus on understanding the importance of affirmative consent in relation to sexual activity can help prepare young people to engage in ethical and respectful sexual relationships. [67] Given that many young people rely on non-verbal rather than verbal approaches to seeking or giving consent, it is important that education approaches increase the acceptability and capacity for verbal communication. [68, 69] This entails use of interactive methods which provide opportunity for students to develop, rehearse and normalise communication strategies that can be used within consent conversations. [67, 70]

Objectification is the term used to describe when people treat someone more like an object than a person. Men who believe in male domination and objectifying women are more likely to be sexually coercive than men who believe in gender equality. [71] They also tend to have reduced empathy for women and are more likely to engage in psychological, physical and sexual violence towards their intimate partners. [72] Women can also self-objectify by internalising the norms and standards set by others. This can lead to women applying external beauty standards to their own body, self-silencing expression of their views or preferences and accepting violence or coercion. Given the effect that gender norms can have on attitudes towards consent conversations, it is important that education approaches invite critical thinking and solution focused approaches for interrupting or challenging those norms which can lead to harmful or abusive outcomes.

Learning intentions

- Students will identify ways that gender norms can influence intimate interactions and relationships.
- Students will critique the role of media in perpetuating gendered expectations within intimate relationships.
- Students will identify ways that gender norms and associated power relations can influence conversations about consent.
- Students will develop communication strategies for conducting respectful consent conversations.

Equipment

- 'Consent conversation' scenarios
- 'Communicating about consent' scripts
- 'Information about violence, consent and the law' handout
- 'Help-sources' tool (access this from Topic 5, Activity 1)

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Provide students with content advice. Explain that in this lesson, students will discuss the ways different kinds of media can influence assumptions about behaviour within intimate relationships and conversations about consent. As part of the lesson, they will review the 'Information about violence, consent and the law' handout and respond to scenarios to advise characters about how they could conduct consent conversations within relationships. Remind students about class ground rules or agreements about respectful behaviour.
2. Provide them the 'Information about violence, consent and the law' and the 'Help-sources' tool handouts, informing them that the class will have access to this information as part of this and following lessons.

3. Ask students to pool their ideas about how to explain what 'consent' means. Develop a robust definition together. Use the information provided here to help strengthen the definition.

   Affirmative consent is when a person takes active steps to ensure they have established whether another person wants to engage in sexual activity before they engage in it, as well as during any form of sexual activity.

   Consent is an informed, free and voluntary agreement that is freely given without any form of pressure, by someone who is in a fit state to make their decision. In terms of sexual contact, affirmative consent is where a person takes active steps to make sure they have found out whether another person is consenting or is a willing participant who wants to engage in sexual activity, before and during sexual activity. This can include but is not limited to verbally asking and getting a verbal 'yes' or a reciprocating move like removing clothes. This includes asking before sexual touching or kissing, as well as before other forms of sexual activity like intercourse. Checking for consent also continues during sexual activity.

   Consent is about respect and good communication. In sexual relationships, consent is an ongoing process of discussing boundaries and what each participant is comfortable with. Consent cannot be given by individuals who are underage, intoxicated or incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, or asleep or unconscious. If someone is pressured or threatened into saying 'yes', that isn't consent, because the agreement was not given freely. Unequal power dynamics – for example, an adult engaging in sexual activity with an employee or student, also mean that consent cannot be freely given. Consenting to something at one time, does not mean someone gives consent for other activities or for the same activity on other occasions.

4. Provide students with access to the 'Information about violence, consent and the law' handout. If you have time, you could create a presentation to talk students through the content, or consider a simple jigsaw task, where each member of a small group reads a section of the document and then presents the key information from their section to others in their group.

5. Summarise the key information about consent within sexual interactions.

   This is a useful summary of the key points from the law relating to consent within sexual interactions.

   - Consent should be **affirmative** – that is the person must actively take steps by saying or doing something to find out if the other person consents (checking in prior to and during sexual activity).
   - Consent should be given by people who are **old enough** – children under 12 cannot give consent. Under the age of 16, people can consent with those who are within 24 months of their age. A 16- or 17-year-old cannot consent to having sex with a person in a position of authority or power over them, including a tutor, relative, teacher or coach.
   - Consent should be **mutual** – all involved are consenting.
   - Consent should be **freely given** – no person feels obliged, threatened or pressured.
   - Consent should be **informed** – each person knows exactly what they are consenting to and with whom they are consenting to interact.
   - Consent should be **certain** – each person is sure that they want to engage in the sexual activities agreed to.
   - Consent should be **clear** – each person involved has given the consent in a way that it is fully understood by the other person or persons involved.
   - Consent should be **ongoing** – all people involved must continue to consent to what is happening. This means consent can be withdrawn at any time and this means the activity must end immediately.
   - Consent can only be given when someone is in a **fit state** – this means they must not be asleep, unconscious or so strongly affected by alcohol or other drugs that they are not in a fit state to give consent.

6. Ask students to pair–share or work in small groups to describe the approaches to consent conversations that they most commonly encounter in the media via movies, games and TV series which include dating or intimate relationships within the narrative. They should include their response to the following questions:

   - How often do you see consent conversations enacted as part of the drama?
   - What messages do these stories circulate about the gender norms and roles within dating or intimate relationships?
   - In what ways do they show unequal power relations?

7. Invite students to report back and to comment on what they observe.

   They may share observations like:

   - The male typically initiates and the female responds.
   - Sex just happens and there is no shown need for conversations about consent.
   - Getting a sexual partner is a competitive thing for men and they gain status from other men when they attract new partners.
   - Consent conversations are never heard, regardless of the gender identity or sexuality of the characters.
   - Women feel they have to please the man to keep the relationship.
   - There is no conversation about contraception or protection from sexually transmitted infections.
   - There are different standards that affect the reputations of men and women.
   - Sex is always wonderful for both parties regardless of the gender identity or sexuality of the characters.
   - The man is supposed to be strong and in charge.
   - Same-sex and same-gender relationships are made into a big drama, rather than just part of ordinary life.
   - The woman is supposed to be 'beautiful' and loyal to one man.
   - Heterosexual relationships are the most commonly shown.
   - Stereotypes abound and apply across characters regardless of their gender identities or sexualities.
   - Trans or gender-diverse people are rarely shown just in regular professional or family roles and it is usually all about their bodies or their sexual relationships.
   - Only certain kinds of young and 'beautiful' bodies are presumed to be sexually attractive to others, regardless of the sexuality or gender identity of the characters.

8. Explain that their next task is to take one or more of the 'Consent conversation' scenarios and create a short script (using the support of the 'Communicating about consent' scripts if needed) which gives an example of how the characters might either check for consent, refuse consent, set limits on their consent or withdraw consent.

   Ask students to report back on their scenarios and share their possible scripts.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Outline which aspects of the lesson were most useful in drawing attention to the ways people could have clear and respectful communications about consent.



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

9. Provide students with content advice. Advise students that in upcoming sessions you will be dealing with the issue of gender-based violence. This means discussing scenarios that involve forms of sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as situations involving family violence or abuse. There will also be activities which focus on consent and the law, including the importance of asking for consent before engaging in sexual activity and respecting the response given. There will be additional activities based around how to have consent conversations, as well as around peer support and help-seeking for those who have experienced gender-based violence. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

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; avoid positioning gender as a discreet binary by introducing your pronouns and checking which pronouns students use for themselves. A binary is something that consists of 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 non-binary 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). [9]



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Consent conversation scenarios

- What advice can you give about how to seek affirmative consent?
- What could each of the characters say or do as part of clear and respectful consent conversations?
- What could they say to check in about or clarify non-verbal signals that may be sent?

Scenario 1: First date. Suni has liked Krys for a long time. On their first date they went to a movie and kissed heaps throughout the film. On the way home, Krys started to touch Suni in ways they didn't feel okay about. Suni tried pulling away, but Krys didn't seem to get the message.

Scenario 2: Established couple. Rayyan and Sam had been a couple for nearly 8 months. Rayyan wanted things to go further between them, and one night when they were at a party, Rayyan tried to take things further with Sam by pressuring him for sex. But Sam got upset, walked off and wouldn't answer texts the next day.

Scenario 3: Different backgrounds. Noah and Juliet were in Year 12. Noah's family were very religious and believed that it was wrong to have sex outside of marriage. They really wanted Noah to do well at school and get into a good university course. They told Noah he shouldn't have a relationship in Year 12 so he could focus on study. Juliet's family was different and were okay about things like her older brother having his girlfriend sleep over. When they were together, which wasn't often, Noah often cut things off when they got a bit intimate. Juliet was keen to have sex and wanted to know if Noah was too, but she wasn't sure how to talk to him about it. So far the two of them had never talked about their beliefs or about the differences in their families in relation to religion.

Scenario 4: Request for nudes. Chad (17) was sending heaps of texts to Xavier (17), saying stuff like, 'If you really liked me, you'd send me a nude. I won't show anyone.' Xavier hated getting these messages and felt pressured to respond. He wasn't into taking selfies and worried that Chad might keep or share his pics when the relationship ended. It was starting to feel stressful to be asked all the time though and it did seem like Chad liked him a lot. Maybe he should trust and just send one pic?

Scenario 5: Wrong place. Marcella (18) and Jude (19) were a couple. One night they both had a lot to drink at a party and Marcella started initiating a sexual act with Jude. It was crowded and there was no private place to be and people were watching. Marcella didn't care, but Jude didn't want things happening at this level in front of everyone.

Scenario 6: Wrong time. Anh (19) and Yusuf (20) moved in together during their second year of Uni. Things had been great between them, but study and part-time work were stressful and tiring for Anh and sometimes she just didn't want to have sex. She tried telling Yusuf when she was tired and needed an early night, but he'd get upset and make Anh feel like she was negatively impacting their relationship. He kept putting pressure on her to 'show him' that she still liked him.

Scenario 7: Party partner. Demi (18) and Aidan (17) went to different schools. They met at a party and got together on the dance floor, where they couldn't talk because the music was too loud**.** Aidan signalled for Demi to come outside, where Demi thought they'd chat and get to know each other better, but Aidan started kissing her deeply and putting his hands all over her body. Demi completely froze, but Aidan didn't seem to pick up on what this meant.

Scenario 8: Is this all there is? David (21) and Ina (18) had sex for the first time after dating for a few months. Every time they've seen each other since then, David assumes they'll have sex immediately and then he often leaves soon afterwards. Although Ina likes having sex, she doesn't want it to be the only thing they do when they spend time together, or for it to happen every time, but that seems to be what David expects.

Communicating about consent scripts

Asking for consent might sound like:

- Do you want to go out with me?
- Is it okay if I kiss you now?
- Are you happy to keep going?
- Do you want to take things further?
- Can we check in together about how far we want to go?
- Can I touch you here?
- Do you feel okay with this?
- You're pulling away/not responding/seem uneasy/seem tense .... does that mean you want me to stop?
- Can we talk about what we're going to do about protection and contraception?
- Do you want to have sex?
- How far do you want to go?
- Are you okay with doing this here? Now?
- How do you think our first date should go?
- Is it okay if I...?
- I'm not sure if you're into this. Is this what you want?
- How is this working for you?
- Tell me how you would like things to go between us.
- (You can add more suggestions for possible lines).

Setting limits on consent might sound like:

- I don't want to go any further than kissing, hugging, touching.
- Can we stay like this for a while? Things are moving too fast.
- I'm not sure what you mean by 'further'. Can we slow down and work this out?
- We need to work out what we're going to do for protection.
- I want it to happen at the right time and in the right place – not here, not now.
- I don't feel okay about doing this here, can we do it somewhere else/another time?
- I need to think about this for a while. I'm not ready to make this decision yet.
- I feel like you're putting pressure on me to do what you want.
- You're rushing this. I don't want this to happen so fast.
- You're making out this means I don't like you. I'm really into you, but I don't want to ...
- I want us to know each other better before we get more intense.
- If you really like me, you should want it to work for me too.
- I like it when you... but not when you ...
- Let's each say what we like, and then work out what's right for us.
- For me, sex has to include condoms every time. Are you okay with that?
- I want us just to get to know each other for the first few dates. Then we can work out what is next for us.
- (You can add more suggestions for possible lines).

Communicating about consent scripts

Refusing or withdrawing consent might sound like or look like:

- I'm not into you.
- I'm not interested.
- I don't want to hook up with you.
- I don't want you to kiss me.
- I don't want you to touch me.
- I don't want to do this.
- I am okay with this, but I don't want to go further.
- I want you to stop.
- This is not what I want.
- Leave me alone.
- It's too early in our relationship for this.
- I want us to work things out between us before we go any further.
- That's not okay for me. I don't want to go that far until I am really serious about someone.
- I don't want to go any further than this.
- I just want us to talk.
- I don't want to hook up.
- I really like you, but I don't want to go any further.
- You're hurting me. I want you to stop.
- This is not what I am into.
- Stop. I don't like that.
- (You can add more suggestions for possible lines).

Non-verbal body signals that someone does not consent may include:

- pulling away
- not responding
- freezing
- not initiating
- looking stressed
- shrinking away
- avoiding touch
- walking away
- not smiling back
- crying
- looking scared
- seeming fearful or anxious
- mixed signals or signals that are hard to read
- not seeming enthusiastic
- not seeming like they enjoy it
- looking away
- shaking their head
- holding onto their clothes
- blocking attempts to touch them or to undo their clothes
- holding their breath
- flinching
- being unwilling or unable to speak
- not doing things to actively join in.

Note: If someone is asleep, unconscious, or strongly affected by alcohol or other drugs, or has a significant cognitive impairment or acquired brain injury that inhibits their cognitive awareness: **Stop.** They can't legally give consent.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is violent behaviour?

Violent behaviour is any behaviour that:

- causes another person an injury to their body that interferes with their health or comfort
- makes a person fear they will be injured.

In the law such violence is referred to as assault. There are different types of assault including physical assault, sexual assault and threatening to cause harm.

Violent behaviour can be carried out by anyone, including a friend, a family member, an acquaintance, a partner, a boss or a stranger.

When violent behaviour is perpetrated by family members against other past or current family members or in intimate relationships, it is called family violence.

Violent behaviour is against the law and can carry very serious penalties.

What is physical assault?

Physical assault is a crime. It takes place when a person uses physical violence and causes hurt or injury to another person's body. It can happen as part of family violence or sexual assault.

Physical assault can include: punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping or choking.

If a person threatens another person with harm or behaves in a way that makes that person think they will be harmed, this can also be a crime.

What is family violence?

Family violence is any violent, threatening or controlling behaviour that happens in a current or a past family, or in intimate relationships.

Family violence is a crime.

The crime of family violence can include behaviour towards a family member that is:

- **physically abusive:** for example, punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping, choking
- **sexually abusive:** for example, forcing someone to have sex or do sexual activities, either by watching or participating
- **emotionally or psychologically abusive:** for example, constantly criticising a person's personality, their looks or the way they dress, constantly putting them down or intimidating them, stopping them contacting their family or friends
- **economically abusive:** for example, using coercive powers to control the economic circumstances of another person, controlling the money, not giving a person enough money to survive on, forcing them to hand over their money, not letting them work
- **threatening or coercive:** for example, when someone threatens to do any of these things, scares someone into doing something.

It is also a crime for an adult to act in such a way that a child hears, witnesses or is otherwise exposed to the effects of these behaviours.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities define family violence more broadly and more encompassing than that used above to include physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is consent?

- Consent means getting permission from another person to do something. Getting consent is important in all sorts of everyday situations, like asking permission to borrow something or asking permission to share a story or photo on social media.
- Getting consent is important for any sexual activity with another person.
- For consent to be real it must be freely given. This means the person being asked to do something knows exactly what is being asked of them and agrees to it voluntarily without feeling pressured or threatened in any way.
- There are laws about consent and sexual activity.
- Consent is needed for any sexual act, not just those that involve penetration.
- Without consent, any sexual activity is against the law.

You must give and get consent before any sort of sexual activity with another person, not just penetrative sex. Consent is important for all people, of all sexualities and in all kinds of relationships.

What does the law say about consent?

Consent in law is free and voluntary agreement between people. A person does not consent to an act just because they do not resist the act verbally or physically.

Further, a person does not consent to an act just because they consented to:

- a different act with the same person
- the same act with the same person at a different time or place
- the same act with a different person
- a different act with a different person.

Whether or not a person reasonably believes that another person is consenting to an act depends on the circumstances. A person's belief that the other person consents to an act is not reasonable if, within a reasonable time before or at the time the act takes place, the person does not say or do anything to find out whether the other person consents to the act.

As the legislation outlines above, the law says a person must ask and get consent before starting or continuing any sort of sexual activity with another person. This can include, but isn't limited to, verbally asking and getting a 'yes' or a physical gesture like kissing or nodding in response to a question.

A person cannot be understood to consent to an act just because they do not resist the act either verbally (through what they say) or physically (through what they do). It is also not consent if they were forced, harmed or were in fear of force or harm of any kind, or if they were pressured (also called 'coerced') or intimidated (made to feel scared).

Consent must be **continually** given and received. You can't ever assume that someone has consented, even if you're in a relationship with that person, or they have consented to something in the past. A person can withdraw their consent at any time. If a person changes their mind, or says something like 'stop', it is a crime to keep going.

That means it is really important for the person initiating the sexual activity to always check before starting, and also along the way, to make sure the other person wants to begin and also continue the sexual activity. This is called 'affirmative consent' or taking ongoing positive steps to find out if the other person is consenting.

The law says a person can never assume that just because someone has given consent in the past, that this means they will agree to the sexual activity again next time.

Also, consenting to one type of sexual activity does not mean someone is consenting to other kinds of sexual activity.

Consent needs to be asked for with every new sexual act.

The law also says that a person who said yes can change their mind at any time during sexual activity and the person being asked to stop has to stop when consent is withdrawn.

It is also an offence to take intimate videos of someone without their consent and to distribute, or threaten to distribute intimate images, including deepfake porn. Image-based sexual abuse involves the non-consensual production and/or sharing of intimate images or threats to do so.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is sexual activity?

The law says an activity may be sexual due to:

- the area of the body that is involved in the activity, including (but not limited to) the genital or anal region, the buttocks or, in the case of a female or a person who identifies as a female, the breasts
- the fact that the person engaging in the activity seeks or gets sexual arousal or sexual gratification from the activity
- any other aspect of the activity, including the circumstances in which it is engaged in (for example, an adult watching pornography in the presence of a child).

When does the law say a person cannot have given consent?

- A person can be unable to provide lawful consent because of their age (that is, being too young or the age difference being too great – see the 'Age of consent' facts).
- The person submits to the act because of force or the fear of force, whether to that person or to someone else.
- The person submits to the act because of the fear of harm of any type to that person or to someone else or to an animal.
- The person submits to the act because of coercion or intimidation.
- The person is so affected by alcohol or drugs that they are incapable of consenting to the sexual activity or being able to withdraw their consent.
- The person is unlawfully detained (for example, being locked in a room and not allowed out without doing a sexual act).
- The person is mistaken about the identity of a person (they thought they were engaging in sexual activity with one person, but another person has stepped in, for example, in a dark room).
- The person is overborne by the abuse of a relationship of authority or trust.
- The person consents because the other person has a position of authority over them (for example, a boss, a parent, family member, teacher, carer, coach, support worker – see the 'Age of consent' facts).
- They are asleep or unconscious.
- The person is mistaken about the sexual nature of the act.
- The person is incapable of understanding the sexual nature of the act.
- The person mistakenly believes that the act is for medical or hygienic purposes.
- The person is does not say or do anything to indicate that they consent.
- Having already given consent to the act, the person later withdraws consent to the sexual activity occurring or continuing.
- The act occurs in the provision of commercial sexual services and the person engages in the act because of a false or misleading representation that the person will be paid.
- The person engages in the act on the basis that a condom is used and either:
- before or during the act, any other person involved in the act intentionally removes the condom or tampers with the condom, or
- the person who was to use the condom intentionally does not use it.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is where someone does something sexual that makes a person feel uncomfortable or touches their body in a sexual way without their consent.

Sexual assault is a crime.

The crime of sexual assault includes:

- sexual intercourse (including penetration of genitalia or anus, vagina and oral sex) without a person's consent
- sexual touching (including unwanted kissing, groping) without a person's consent
- making someone sexually touch another person without their consent
- forcing someone to sexually touch themselves
- threatening to rape or sexually assault someone.

What is stalking?

Stalking is when someone imposes themselves into another person's life in a way that causes distress, fear and disruption and can include a number of different behaviours including unwanted and repeated contact or harassment.

Stalking is a crime. The crime of stalking can include:

- tracking someone's use of the internet, email or other electronic communication
- repeatedly contacting someone by means like phone, email or uninvited in-person appearances
- making threats
- following someone.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual behaviour in situations where a reasonable person would expect that the person on the receiving end might be offended, humiliated, intimidated or feel undermined.

Sexual harassment is against the law when it occurs in certain areas of public life, for example:

- school, university or TAFE
- work (paid or voluntary)
- shops
- public transport
- in activities people participate in, like sport.

Sexual harassment behaviour can include:

- unwelcome sexual touching, staring, unwanted requests to go on dates
- requests for sexual favours
- suggestive jokes
- any unwelcome gesture, action or comment of a sexual nature aimed at a person or in their presence, like intrusive questions about a person's private life or physical gestures.

Sexual harassment can be:

- physical
- verbal
- written (including texting, social media posting or online messaging, or by displaying unwanted sexual posters or screensavers).

Some forms of sexual harassment can constitute criminal offences – for example, indecent assault, stalking, indecent exposure.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is sexting?

Sexting is using a mobile phone or the internet to take, receive, ask for, or share intimate photos or videos (sometimes called 'nudes'). Sexting can include photos or videos where someone is naked, partly naked, posing sexually or doing a sexual act.

Under the *Summary Offences Act 1966* (Vic) it is unlawful to:

- intentionally distribute an intimate image of someone who is under 18 or looks under 18 to others, even if the person in the image agreed to it being distributed, where the distribution of the image is contrary to community standards of acceptable conduct
- intentionally distribute an intimate image of an adult (18 or over) to others without that adult's consent
- threaten to do any of the above.

An 'intimate image' means a moving or still image that shows a person engaged in sexual activity, or in a sexual manner or context, or the genital or anal region of a person or in the case of a female or a person who identifies as a female, the breasts.

Sexting can be a crime if it involves people over 18 taking or having sexual images of people under 18, or when people intentionally distribute an intimate image of a person under 18, even if they have consented. This can be considered child abuse (or child pornography). Sexting is a crime if you intentionally send an intimate image of a person under 18 to others, even if that person agrees to the image being sent. Threatening to send an intimate image of a person to others if the person believes that you will carry about the threat may also be a criminal offence.

For a person to protect themselves, it is safer if they do not ask for, send, post online or keep on their phone or computer, nude or sexual images of someone under 18.

What can a person do if they're worried about a sext?

If a person is worried about a sext, it is recommended that they:

- delete images they are uncomfortable with straight away, especially if the person in the picture has asked them to do so
- do not send these images to anyone else or post them online
- ask the person sending the unwanted sexts to stop
- never ask for, share or keep sexts involving people under 18
- report this to a trusted adult
- report this to Victoria Police themselves or with help of a trusted adult, as a crime may have been committed.
- If a person is worried about a nude or sexual picture of themselves that someone has taken or shared (or threatened to take or share), they can do the following things to protect themselves:
- report the images to the relevant website or social media to have them removed
- get legal advice (organisations like Victorian Legal Aid can provide free advice)
- contact Victoria Police.

Viewing pornography

It is against the law to ask for, make, send or have possession of child abuse material.

It is illegal to view pornography if the people in the video are under the age of 18 (or appear to be under the age of 18). Child pornography is defined as a photo, video or other images (including animations, cartoons or text) that shows someone under 18 engaging in sexual activity or depicted in a sexual way. This includes nudity or posing sexually.

Forcing somebody else to watch pornography is also a sexual offence. Legally, any sexual activity including viewing sexual activity online should be mutually consenting between all parties.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What is grooming?

Grooming is when a person over 18 engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person under the age of 16 for sexual activity at a later time. The person communicates with a young person who is under 16 years old, seeking to win their trust, so that they can then sexually abuse that young person. They may deliberately build a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them sexually.

Grooming can happen online or in person and may take place over a long period of time.

Online grooming may involve adults creating fake profiles and posing as children or teens to befriend someone and gain their trust. In-person grooming might happen when an adult shows an interest in the young person, befriending them and/or their family, giving gifts or positive attention. The child or young person will often not realise that they are being groomed.

An adult who grooms a child or young person may trick their family or carers into thinking they are a good friend of the family. They may make the child or young person keep the secret by telling them there will be terrible consequences for refusing to do something sexual; by pretending that they love them and trying to get the young person to feel that they are in love; or by targeting a need the young person may have by providing friendship, care, shelter, money or gifts. They may tell the child that no one will believe them if they tell, or that what they are doing is not wrong, or that it is the child or young person who has done something illegal and will be in trouble if they tell anyone.

Grooming is not the fault of the child or young person. It is a deliberate act by the adult, who will also keep it secret as they know what they are doing is against the law. Grooming is a criminal offence under the *Victorian Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014* and the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic).

What can a person do if they have been or believe they will be abused or assaulted?

If a person has been abused, it is never their fault.

There is a range of things a person can do.

- If a person is ever in immediate danger, they can call the police straight away on 000 (triple zero) and try to get to a safe place.
- If a person has been abused or believe they will be abused, they have the right to be protected. They can report the abuse or fear of abuse by calling their local police station on 131 444.
- If a person feels comfortable, they are encouraged to talk to someone they trust – for example, a parent, family member, a close friend or a school counsellor. If they don't want to tell anyone they know, they might feel more comfortable talking to a counsellor over the phone. They could call:
  - **Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800.** This is a 24-hour service for 5 to 25-year-olds. They offer a very supportive service and you can talk to them without giving your name. You can also email them or use online chat.
  - **1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732**. They are open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse. You don't need to give your name if you don't want to or you can give a different name.

Information about violence, consent and the law

What can a person do if they have been sexually harassed?

If a person is experiencing sexual harassment, it is never their fault.

Sometimes sexual harassment can involve sexual assault, stalking or other criminal offences. If this is the case, the person experiencing this should contact police or tell someone who can contact the police on their behalf.

If a person is being harassed at school, it is the school's responsibility to make the person feel safe. The person experiencing the sexual harassment should report this to a trusted teacher, a school counsellor or wellbeing officer and ask them to help.

If a person is being harassed at work, it is their employer's responsibility to do everything reasonable to make their workplace free from sexual harassment.

If a person's employer does nothing or the person is unhappy with the employer's actions, they can report the harassment to WorkSafe or make a complaint to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Consequences of breaking the law

If a person commits a crime involving violence, the consequences can be very serious. They could be investigated and charged by the police. If they are found guilty, they could end up with a criminal record or even go to jail. For some offences, if they are sentenced by the court, they could also be placed on the Victorian Register of Sex Offenders. This might make it difficult for them to work in jobs where they have contact with children.

Adapted from:

Youth Law Australia

* Refer to Youth Law Australia for updates as laws can change.

Reflecting on everyday practise

Reflect on how traditions, practises or structures in the school can work to entrench or challenge gender norms and privilege.

Ask yourself:

- What strategies can teachers use to foster respectful gender relationships?
- What strategies can teachers use to ensure that their curriculum content is informed by a gender-inclusive approach?
- What strategies can teachers use to challenge and follow up on expressions of sexist, homophobic or transphobic behaviour, along with other forms of racism, cultural shaming or hate speech?

Talking further

Encourage students to talk to peers and family about the ways expectations relating to gender might influence choices and behaviour.

Optional game

The Hunter and Prey Game works well to raise topic-related themes, like showing respect when initiating intimate relationships. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.

Topic 05 Positive gender relationships

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- understand the patterns and prevalence of gender-based violence
- understand the influence that negative gender norms can have on the perpetration of gender-based violence within sexual and romantic relationships
- develop safety standards for prevention of gender-based violence
- understand the standards around consent contained in the law
- identify the ways communicative strategies for seeking, giving and denying consent can be applied in a range of contexts and relationships
- understand how to assert personal boundaries and standards in a range of different relational 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 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

There is a strong rationale for providing education on the prevention of gender-based violence. Studies show that when delivered as part of a broader whole-school approach to respectful relationships, classroom programs can have a positive influence on student attitudes and behaviour [57, 58, 73-75].

High rates of victimisation and associated trauma mean that in any class there will likely be students who have been affected by family violence and/or sexual violence. In any school, there will also be a proportion of staff affected. Some of those affected may find the focus on this material to be particularly troubling. They may also be without established means of support, as many people do not disclose that they have suffered abuse or sexual violence in childhood or beyond. [76] Disclosures about bullying, family violence and sexual abuse can increase during or following provision of such programs, with some disclosures made to educators, while other students turn to helplines [77]. Given this likelihood, it's important that clear protocols and pathways for teacher response are clearly established in advance, that wellbeing staff are made aware of the timing of program delivery and that students are provided with information about trusted external help sources that they may access by phone or online.

Trauma-informed approaches to education recommend that teachers be informed about the strategies that may be useful to assist those affected to settle, connect and participate in class. Effective strategies include: providing opportunities for student voice, choice and control; establishment of positive and caring relationships; understanding the effects of trauma; and use of proactive approaches to provide wellbeing support. [78] To signal recognition of the possible effects of trauma being triggered and to promote awareness of participation options and further support it is appropriate to provide content advice – both in advance, and at the commencement of lessons addressing gender-based violence. Content advice can include description of the material that will be addressed in the lesson, options for modified participation and information about how to access support within and beyond the school.

Topic 05

Activity 1: Gender-based violence, consent and the law

Informed by the evidence base

Gender-based violence is associated with unequal distribution of power. Power is exercised through control of resources, ideas and knowledge. It can be used in positive and negative ways. For example, someone with power can decide to use their power to create positive change. But power can also be abused. Gender-based violence is an abuse of power. It can include the abusive use of physical power. It can also occur through the abuse of psychological or emotional influence, or coercive control, which is a pattern of abuse over a period of time, inclusive of behaviours that coerce, control and dominate family members. [52] In many societies, women are expected to be submissive to men and men are socialised to expect to have women submit to them. This results in women having less power. Masculinity research identifies the importance of a focus on positive masculinities and a critique of violence-endorsing attitudes. Traditional gender norms can lead to men and boys believing it is more socially acceptable for them to express anger and rage than to show emotional vulnerability. [79] This can lead to the justification of acts of violence within and between genders and is a driver of violence against women and girls. [21, 22, 53] These masculinity norms can also lead to increased rates of risk-taking on the part of boys and men and reduced likelihood of seeking help for physical or mental health problems. [80] Gender norms related to femininity standards can lead to increased rates of body image distress for women and girls [81, 82] and girls can be socialised to expect that they should defer to men. [57] People of diverse gender and/or sexuality also experience disempowerment due to institutional and interpersonal forms of marginalisation and discrimination and are disproportionately affected by violence and by mental health problems resulting from discrimination. [35, 83]

Homophobic violence, transphobic violence and biphobic violence are forms of gender-based violence. They reflect negative and prejudiced attitudes and show up when people feel entitled to use violence against those who do not conform to the dominant gender norms. For example, when boys and men are teased because they act in a manner which is held to be 'feminine', or when girls and women are excluded or judged because they want to do things that are believed to be 'too masculine' and therefore not proper for girls.

Intersex people are also vulnerable to harassment and violence. [84] A review of research studies found that people with intersex variance experience a higher incidence of anxiety, depression and psychological distress compared to the general population, linked to stigma and discrimination. [84] They are also more likely than the general population to report that it has been challenging for them to get good understanding and helpful responses from health professionals. [84] An Australian survey of people with intersex variations found that many experienced negative wellbeing outcomes, including dropping out of school and suicidal ideation and 19% attempted suicide. [85] More than half had told their classmates that they were intersex, but most had not disclosed to a teacher. Most (92%) had not received sex education from their school that was inclusive of intersex people and most (77%) had experienced bullying at school. Many of them said they had avoided getting into romantic or intimate relationships to protect themselves against possible negative reactions from others. Only a quarter said that school was a positive experience for them. Participants recommended that schools provide inclusive sex and biology education, good counselling support and proactive support to stop the bullying. Some suggested that although many students with intersex variations do not disclose their intersex status at school, some may be more likely to following good, inclusive sex education. They suggested that it would be important for teachers to create a safe space and support those who do choose to disclose but also make it clear to students that nobody is under any pressure to disclose any variations they have.

Some boys and men can become defensive in response to initiatives addressing the prevention of gender-based violence

[86] Attribution theory suggests that one reason for this is that the discussion can be experienced as an attack on men in general and as an attack on their own personal identity or integrity. This can lead to the presumption that they are being individually blamed or accused or that they are being expected to redress a wrong they did not perpetrate. In response, there can be an urge to defend one's membership group, to challenge the veracity of the data, to disbelieve the scale or impact of the problem or to attribute blame on the victims themselves. [87] A combination of relevant and inclusive scenarios and data can help to demonstrate the different prevalence rates affecting males and females, while also building recognition of the effects of violence on targets and on witnesses.

Australian data shows that the majority of those victimised via sexual assault are females, though males can also be victims. Males are most commonly the perpetrators. [88] A focus on understanding the importance of affirmative consent in relation to sexual activity can help prepare young people to engage in ethical and respectful sexual relationships. [58, 66, 89]

Learning intentions

- Students will understand the nature and prevalence of gender-based violence.
- Students will learn about the laws relating to consent.
- Students will develop communication strategies to check for and communicate about consent.

Equipment

- 'Information about violence, consent and the law' handout
- 'Gender-based violence, consent and the law' scenarios
- Teacher notes for 'Gender-based violence, consent and the law' scenarios
- 'Help-sources' tool

Coaching point:
Protective interrupting. This is 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. Provide students with content advice. Remind students that in this lesson they will be addressing gender-based violence within interpersonal relationships. As part of this work, they will engage with scenarios which include examples of different types of gender-based violence, including sexual assault, image abuse, stalking and coercive control. As such, the subject matter is sensitive and can be distressing. Encourage the class to provide a supportive environment for this important discussion, in the recognition that many people have been victimised and that many people are also concerned about friends and family who have also been subjected to these forms of violence. Rather than people's personal stories being a focus, scenarios are provided to maintain privacy and respectfully address this topic without discussing people's personal lives in class. Some people may choose to engage in help-seeking outside of class and the tool provided is designed to remind them of the different ways they can do this. There will also be a focus on help-seeking, peer support and help sources across the subsequent sessions.
2. For some, a focus on this topic will not be well-timed. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

3. Ask the class to work together to build a definition of gender-based violence. Ensure that their definition includes the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and social aspects of violence and a recognition that violence can play out in a range of face-to-face and digital environments.

Gender-based violence

This is violence that targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. Gender-based violence is any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to someone (male, female or gender-diverse people) based on gender role expectations and stereotypes. Gender-based violence occurs as a result of normative role expectations associated with one's gender and unequal power relationships between genders.

Gender-based violence can affect anyone (including men, women and people of diverse genders and sexualities). Data shows that those people committing gender-based violence are more commonly men. Some men committing gender-based violence are also victims, however, those who are most commonly victimised are girls, women and people of diverse gender or sexuality.

Coaching point:
Use of terms. Some people prefer to use the word 'target' rather than 'victim' to imply that the perpetrator made a choice and that their act was deliberate. Some prefer to use the word 'survivor' or 'victim-survivor' rather than the word 'victim' as they find this word more suggestive of strength and recovery. Others prefer the word 'victim' as suggesting the innocence of the targeted party. Many argue that it is important to avoid use of the label 'bully', as that suggests an identity and to comment instead on naming the behaviour of the person doing the bullying.

4. Explain that students will now engage with some information about the law as it relates to physical and sexual violence and to consent.

   Emphasise that they will look in some detail at what the law says about different forms that violence can take within interpersonal and intimate relationships. Provide students with access to the 'Information about violence, consent and the law'.

5. Remind students about laws relating to the age of consent: that in some states of Australia and in different countries laws can differ, for example in relation to what is understood as the age of consent.

Age of consent facts

The age of consent is the age at which the law says a person can agree to sexual activity. If a person is under that age, the law says they cannot legally agree to any sexual activity.

In Victoria, a person under 12 years of age cannot agree to sexual activity at all.

Individuals who are 12 to 15 years of age can only give consent if they are aged within 24 months of each other in age. Any person who does something sexual with a person under the age of consent is breaking the law.

In Victoria, if a person is 16 years or older, they can legally have sex or engage in other sexual activity with someone else who is 16 or older as long as both people are consenting. The exception to this rule is that a 16- to 17-year-old cannot agree to have sex with someone who is in a position of care or authority over them (for example, a tutor, coach, teacher, family member or counsellor).

To check for updates on the law, refer to **Youth Law Australia** https://yla.org.au/.

6. Revise other key pointers about consent by asking students to identify what has to be in place for consent to sexual activity.

Consent

- Consent should be **affirmative** – this means people need to ask whether the other person consents or not.
- Consent can only be given by people who are **old enough** (see age-relevant information above).
- Consent should be **mutual** – all involved are consenting.
- Consent should be **freely given** – no person feels obliged or threatened or pressured.
- Consent should be **informed** – each person knows exactly what they are consenting to and who they are consenting to interact with.
- Consent should be **certain** – each person is sure that they want to engage in the sexual activities agreed to.
- Consent should be **clear** – each person involved has asked and given consent in a way that it is fully understood by the other person or persons.
- Consent should be **ongoing** – all people

involved must continue to consent to what is happening. This means consent can be withdrawn at any time by any of the parties and the activity must end immediately.

- Consent can only be given when someone is in a **fit state** – not when they are asleep, unconscious or heavily affected by alcohol or other drugs.

7. Refer students to the 'Information about violence, consent and the law' handout which has more detail about interpersonal violence and the law. Talk through the summary included below. Remind students that they can use this information as a reference point when they engage further in the lesson and within following lessons.

Summary of violence and the law

In the law, violence is referred to as assault. There are different types of assault crimes, including physical assault, sexual assault and threatening to cause harm.

Physical assault is a crime. It can include punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping or choking. If a person threatens another person with harm or behaves in a way that makes that person think they will be harmed, this can also be a crime.

Family violence is a crime. Family violence is any violent, threatening or controlling behaviour that happens in a current or a past family or in intimate relationships. It can include physical assault, sexual assault, emotional or psychological abuse, economic abuse or threatening to enact any of these forms of violence. Family violence can involve a range of different behaviours and these behaviours can often be a criminal offence – for example, assault.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities define family violence more broadly to include a range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses.

Sexual assault is a crime. It includes sexual intercourse without consent (including penetration of anus, vagina and oral sex), sexual touching without consent, making someone sexually touch another person without their consent, forcing someone to sexually touch themselves, threatening to rape or sexually assault someone.

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual behaviour in situations where a reasonable person would expect that the person on the receiving end might be offended, humiliated, intimidated or feel undermined. Sexual harassment is against the law in certain areas of public life, including work and school). Some forms of sexual harassment can constitute criminal offences – including indecent assault, stalking and indecent exposure – however, not all forms would constitute a crime or assault.

Grooming is a crime. When an adult over 18 communicates with a young person under 16 to connect with them and to find ways to engage with them in a sexual way.

Stalking is a crime. Stalking is when someone imposes themselves into another person's life in a way that causes distress, fear and disruption and can include a number of different behaviours including unwanted and repeated contact or harassment.

Sexting can be a crime if it involves people over 18 taking or having sexual images of people under 18, or when people intentionally distribute an intimate image of a person under 18, even if they have consented. This can be considered child abuse (or child pornography). Sexting is a crime if you intentionally send an intimate image of a person under 18 to others, even if that person agrees to the image being sent. Threatening to send an intimate image of a person to others if the person believes that you will carry about the threat may also be a criminal offence. An 'intimate image' means a moving or still image that shows a person engaged in sexual activity, or in a sexual manner or context, or the genital or anal region of a person and the breasts of a female.

Pornography. Forcing somebody else to watch pornography is also a sexual offence. Legally, any sexual activity including viewing sexual activity online should be mutually consenting between all parties.

8. Explain they will now translate the guidance on checking for violence, consent and the law into what this might look like or sound like within an interaction that happens between people, either in person or online.

9. Use the following scenario to model for the class how they will engage with the scenarios and data.

Scenario A. Physical violence.

Tom (25) roughly grabbed his partner Ella (24) by the arm and pushed her into the car so hard that she hurt her head on the door frame and it started to bleed. He did this as they left a friend's birthday party where Ella had been dancing and talking with some men she knew from her uni days. The next day, Tom said he was sorry and that it was a one-off thing, and he was only jealous because he loved her so much. He promised he would never hurt her again.

Discuss:

- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this scenario?
- What are the attitudes that might lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what type of offence might it be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 5 (17%) women experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since age 18.
- 1 in 16 (6.1%) men experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since age 18.

Source:
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

10. Ask students to work in groups with the scenarios and the 'Information on violence, consent and the law' handout. They can select the scenarios they would prefer to address. The title at the top of the scenario indicates its key focus. Explain they will also see some data with their scenarios which provides some indication about the prevalence of this kind of violence in the Australian context.
11. Invite groups to feedback their findings by:
    - identifying the scenario they addressed
    - naming the types of violence they detected in the scenario
    - pointing to the relevant information about the law
    - sharing their suggestions about what the victim could do
    - describing an alternative and respectful approach the young person who threatened or was violent to another could have used to engage with the other person in a respectful way.
12. Point out that sometimes those who experience violence are told they should have done things differently – like doing whatever is needed to keep the other person happy and always letting them have their own way. Sometimes a person is victimised by forms of coercive control. Coercive control can be harder to identify, as earlier in a relationship it might just come across that someone is 'madly in love' with another person and wants to be involved in every part of their life.

Coercive control can look like when someone is:

- constantly checking your phone
- always wanting to know where you are
- getting upset when you spend time with others
- telling you what you can or can't do, think or wear
- making humiliating jokes about you
- making you feel like you always have to keep them happy and avoid doing anything that could upset them
- making you feel pressured to perform sexual acts they want but you don't like
- using forms of physical violence or restraint
- using threats of leaving or of self-harm if they don't get their own way.

As a tactic, coercive control can include any combination of family violence or relationship violence behaviours used by a person to create a pattern or system of behaviours intended to harm, punish, frighten, dominate, isolate, degrade, monitor or stalk, regulate and subordinate the victim-survivor.

13. Remind students that if the session raised any concerns for them, it can be helpful to talk with someone. Remind them of the help sources available in the school and refer them to key help sources in the community. Highlight the 'Help-sources' tool that alerts people to a range of help sources and provide additional detail about those services available in the school.

Review

To conclude the activity, review the learning intentions with the class. Ask to what extent the activity was useful in assisting them to understand the nature, patterns and prevalence of gender-based violence and the methods that people can use to check for consent and respect the responses given.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

14. Advise students that in the upcoming sessions they will focus the influence of pornography. This means considering/exploring/discussing the ways pornography can influence how people treat others within intimate relationships; how watching a lot of pornography can lead to individuals developing unrealistic or harmful expectations about sex. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

Coaching point:
Staying up to date with policy and law. Policy and law are subject to change over time. Before running this activity, you can check that the legal information provided is up to date by referring to Youth Law Australia's website. Modify any information sheets if needed.

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.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 1. Consent in marriage

Ben (28) and Martin (27) had been married for 3 years. They had Martin's younger sister Tam staying with them for a few weeks on the school holidays. One night Ben came home drunk after being out with his friends. He woke Martin up saying he wanted sex, but Martin said he was too tired. Ben started swearing and Martin begged him to be quiet, so he didn't wake Tam. Ben said the best way to keep him quiet was to have sex. Martin let him because he was worried what his sister would think if she heard the aggression in their relationship.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What type of gender-based violence is happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what type of offence is it?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 16 (6.1%) men report having experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since the age of 18.
- 1 in 5 (17%) women report having experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since the age of 18.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Scenario 2. Sexual assault

Jasmina (17) and Charlie (18) were on their fourth date. So far things had been going well between them. Charlie told Jasmina he wanted to have sex with her and that he had protection. She was a bit nervous but agreed. However, when they started having sexual intercourse, Jasmina found that what he was doing didn't feel okay. She tried to pull away and asked him to stop because he was hurting her. He told her to relax and then it would be okay. She started to cry but he ignored her and kept going.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what might the offence be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 5 (18%) women report having experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.
- 1 in 20 (4.7%) men report having experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.
- 1 in 20 people report having experienced dating violence by a current or previous partner.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 3. Coercive control

Jack (20) started constantly checking the mobile phone of his girlfriend Anouk (19) to see who she was chatting with. Over a few months, Jack became more and more possessive, calling Anouk 5 and sometimes 10 times a day to check what she was doing and where she was. At first, Anouk thought it was cute, thinking it was a sign that Jack was really into her. Then Jack insisted that Anouk stop seeing her other friends. One afternoon, Anouk went out to catch up with old school friends and when she got home Jack threw a tantrum and tried to prevent her from going home by taking her car keys. Anouk had to wait until Jack fell asleep so she could get her keys and go.

Discuss:

- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what might the offence be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 4 women report having experienced emotional abuse by a current or past partner since the age of 15.
- 1 in 20 (4.7%) men report having experienced emotional abuse by a current or past partner since the age of 15.
- 3 in 5 (60%) of those who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner were subject to controlling behaviours (63% of women; 54% men).

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Scenario 4. Gaslighting

Maya (24) and Ahmed (26) have been in a relationship for 10 months. Ahmed earns a lot more money than Maya. Maya wants to go back to uni part time to get a degree so she can earn more money, but she's discouraged because Ahmed constantly tells her she's not that smart and she might fail at uni. He says that given how she looks, she's lucky to have him as a partner. When Maya says that Ahmed is always criticising her, Ahmed tells her she is paranoid, she always takes things the wrong way and needs to lighten up and learn how to take a joke. He says they should marry and start a family. Maya has started to lose her self-confidence and she feels scared at the thought of leaving the relationship or taking on further study.

Discuss:

- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what offence or offences might it be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:
Controlling behaviours

- 3 in 5 (60%) of those who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner were subject to controlling behaviours (63% of women; 54% men).

Financial abuse

- 1 in 2 women who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner report experiencing financial abuse.
- 1 in 3 men who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner report experiencing financial abuse.

Verbal abuse

- 3 in 5 (63%) women who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner report experiencing verbal abuse.
- Just under half (46%) of men who report having experienced emotional abuse by a past partner report experiencing verbal abuse.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. F*amily, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 5. Image-based abuse

Vikal (18) and Kiranna (17) had been seeing each other for a few months. Vikal often sent Kiranna nudes, but when Vikal asked Kiranna to send some of herself, she felt awkward, so she laughed and changed the subject. Eventually she did send Vikal a nude, and a few months later they broke up. She heard from some friends that the pic of her was being shown to other students in their year level.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what might the offence be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 3 people aged 16 to 19 (31%) and 1 in 4 people aged 20 to 29 (27%) report that they had been the victim of at least one form of image-based abuse. (1)
- 10% of 10- to 19-year-olds report sending a sext [nude]. (2)
- 16% of 10- to 19-year-olds report receiving a sext. (2)
- 12% of 10- to 19-year-olds report forwarding a sext without consent. (2)
- 52% of girls report sending a sext because they have been coerced into doing it. (3)
- 23% of boys report at least one coercive motivation for sending a sext. (3)
- 33% of girls compared to 15% of boys said they gave in and sent a sext after repeatedly being asked. (3)

Sources:

(1) Henry, N., Powell, A. & Flynn, A. 2017. Not just *'revenge pornography': Australians' experiences of image-based abuse. A summary report*. Melbourne: RMIT University in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.
(2) Klettke, B., Hallford, D. J., & Mellor, D. J. (2014) *Sexting prevalence and correlates: A systematic literature review*. Clinical Psychology Review, 34(1), 44–53.
(3) Reed, L. A., Boyer, M. P., Meskunas, H., Tolman, R. M., & Ward, L. M. (2020). *How do adolescents experience sexting in dating relationships? Motivations to sext and responses to sexting requests from dating partners*. Children and Youth Services Review, 109, 104696.

Scenario 6. Stalking

Riley (19) and Jiemba (20) went on a couple of dates before Jiemba decided that he didn't have time for dating because he was so busy with work and study. Riley didn't take it well and kept turning up everywhere. He is constantly outside when Jiemba finishes work and sometimes he walks up and down the street past Jiemba 's house. Riley also started sending tonnes of texts. In the beginning Jiemba would reply in a friendly way, but then it started to freak him out. Jiemba gets stressed enough about this to ask other people to give him a ride home from work, just so he doesn't need to deal with Riley.

Discuss:

- What types of violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what might the offence be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 6 women report having experienced stalking since the age of 15.
- 1 in 15 men report having experienced stalking since the age of 15.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 7. Physical violence

Taylor's 18th birthday party did not turn out the way he hoped. People had too much to drink, including his little sister Hannah (14) and his best friend Kester (18). Not long after the birthday speeches, Taylor saw Kester making out with Hannah. He pulled Kester off her and told him to leave Hannah alone because she was too young for him. They got into a physical fight which other people had to break up.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- What alternative respectful approaches could the perpetrators have used?

Facts:

- More than 1 in 3 (36%) of Australians experienced violence by a male perpetrator since the age of 15 compared to 1 in 10 (11%) by a female perpetrator.
- 41% of men report having experienced physical violence compared to 31% of women.
- 66% of men who reported their most recent physical assault said they were assaulted by a male stranger.
- Women are more likely to experience physical assault by someone known to them (92%).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety, Australia: *Statistics for family, domestic, sexual violence, physical assault, partner emotional abuse, child abuse, sexual harassment, stalking and safety* https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/personal-safety-australia/latest-release

Scenario 8. Consent in marriage

Allira (29) and Henry (31) had been married for 2 years. Their 6-month-old child slept in their room, which is common in the first year of a baby's life. One night Henry came home late after drinking with his mates. He woke Allira up and said he wanted sex, but she told him she was too tired. Henry started swearing at her and Allira begged him to be quiet so he wouldn't wake the baby who had taken ages to get to sleep. Henry forced her to have sex. Allira felt afraid and humiliated by Henry's aggression towards her and the sex was very painful.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men have been sexually assaulted and/or threatened since the age of 15. The most common place for women to be sexually assaulted is in their home.
- Intimate partner violence causes more illness, disability and deaths than any other risk factor for women aged 25 to 44.
- 1 woman was killed every 9 days and 1 man every 29 days by a partner between 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022. *Family, domestic and sexual violence* in Australia.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 9. Family violence

Anton (37) doesn't like his wife Shashi (35) going places without him. He told her that she had to stop attending church, and not to take the children out to the shops unless he was with them too. One day Shashi and the children (aged 2 and 4) weren't home when he got back from work. When they returned, he yelled at Shashi and slapped her on the face. The children witnessed Anton hit Shashi and became very distressed. He threatened to hit them as well if they didn't stop crying. Later, Anton told Shashi he was sorry and that he wouldn't hit her again, but that he hoped she had learnt her lesson.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what type of offence might it be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrator have used?

Facts:

Controlling behaviours

- 6 in 10 (60%) of those who report experiencing emotional abuse by a past partner were subject to controlling behaviours (63% of women; 54% men).

Family violence

- 1 in 6 women (17%) and 1 in 16 men (6%) reported having experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or previous partner.
- Around 1 in 14 people reported having experienced physical abuse by a family member before the age of 15 (7.6 % females and 6.2% males) and 1 in 30 had experienced sexual abuse by a family member (5.55% females and 0.9% males).
- In 2020 more than half (54%) of recorded assaults were related to family and domestic violence. Almost 2 in 5 (37%) recorded murders were related to family and domestic violence.
- In 2019–20, more than a third (35%) of assault hospitalisations were due to family and domestic violence.

Source:
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022. *Family, domestic and sexual violence* in Australia.

Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario 10: Intersex rights

Freya (17) did not find out that she was intersex until she was 13 because her parents had been told by doctors not to tell her they had done some surgery shortly after she was born. Her parents said they thought it would be best to keep this a secret from her friends. At first she accepted their advice, but then she did her own research about intersex people and decided to be 'out' and proud about who she was. There was nothing wrong with her body. She was proud to be a part of the intersex community, to celebrate the diversity of all bodies. She had a right to be accepted for who she was. When she was in Year 10, she told her close friends, and they agreed that it was good to be 'out' and proud. They suggested that her parents should get with the times and understand that people of their generation know about intersex and don't have an issue with it.

Freya chose to come out on social media so the message got around quickly. She got lots of positive responses and made some new friends who were also intersex. However, when she started in Year 11, a rumour went around that some boys had challenged Damien (17) to date her, so he could find out more about her body and then tell them. Her friends were outraged and confronted Damien. He said he was a victim too because he really liked Freya, but some boys had found out and they started the false rumour. Now he felt he couldn't ask Freya to go out with him because she would think badly of him.

Discuss:

- When/where was consent happening, or not happening?
- What types of gender-based violence are happening in this story?
- What are the attitudes that lead to this type of violence?
- Is this an offence? If so, what type of offence might it be?
- What alternative respectful approach could the perpetrators have used?

Facts:

- **Intersex is a natural variation in the human population.**

  People with intersex variations are estimated to form between 1.7% to 4% of the general population. However, you often can't tell that someone is intersex by their appearance and due to stigma many people don't tell others that they have intersex variations. (1)

- **People who are intersex have had bad experiences at school.**

  An Australian survey of people with intersex variations found that many dropped out of school, or thought about suicide due to experiencing stigma, secrecy burdens and bullying. More than half had told their classmates that they were intersex, and most (77%) had experienced bullying at school. Most (92%) had not received sex education that was inclusive of intersex people. Many said they had avoided getting into romantic or intimate relationships to protect themselves against possible negative reactions from others. (2)

Sources:

(1) Zeeman L, Aranda K. A Systematic Review of the Health and Healthcare Inequalities for People with Intersex Variance. I*nternational Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* . 2020 Sep 8;17(18):6533. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph17186533. PMID: 32911732; PMCID: PMC7559554.

(2) Jones T. The needs of students with intersex variations, *Sex Education*, 2016 16:6, 602-618, DOI: 10.1080/14681811.2016.1149808

Teacher notes for Gender-based violence, consent and the law scenarios

Scenario A: Tom and Ella

Teacher note: This fits the category of assault.

Scenario 1: Ben and Martin

Teacher note: This fits the category of sexual assault/rape.

Scenario 2: Jasmina and Charlie

Teacher note: This fits the category of sexual assault/rape.

Scenario 3: Jack and Anouk

Teacher note: Currently there is no specific law in Victoria making coercive control and emotional/psychological abuse a crime. However, this form of violence is named within the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) and someone experiencing coercive control may be able to apply to the court for an intervention order to protect themselves from the abuse. If the perpetrator of the abuse breaches the order (that is they continue the behaviour) then it becomes a crime.

Scenario 4: Maya and Ahmed

Teacher note: There is no specific law in Victoria making financial/emotional/psychological abuse a crime. However, this form of violence is named within the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) and someone experiencing it may be able to apply to the court for an intervention order to protect themselves from the abuse. If the perpetrator of the abuse breaches the order (that is, they continue the behaviour) then it becomes a crime.

Scenario 5: Vikal and Kiranna

Teacher note: If Vikal just kept the sext [nude] from Kiranna and deleted it before he was 18, there may not be an offence, as Kiranna may be considered to have consented to creating and sending the sext. However, Vikal committed the crime of image-based abuse by sharing the sext without consent.

Scenario 6: Jiemba and Taylor

Teacher note: This fits the category of stalking.

Scenario 7: Taylor, Kester and Hannah

Teacher note: This could fit the category of assault (Taylor and Kester). It's not clear what has happened in the interaction between Kester (18) with Hannah (14), but the age gap between them is more than 2 years and in Victoria the law says someone between 12 to 15 cannot consent to sex or sexual activity with someone who is 24 months or more older than them.

Scenario 8: Allira and Henry

Teacher note: This fits the category of sexual assault/rape.

Scenario 9: Anton and Shashi

Teacher note: This fits the category of coercive control and physical assault. It would also be termed family violence. Children's exposure to violence (for example, when witnessing it between parents or carers), is also termed family violence.

Scenario 10: Freya and Damien

Teacher note: This fits the category of bullying and sexual harassment of both Freya and Damien.

‘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 and/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.

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.

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

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

Hours: available on call from 9 am to 1 am every day
Call: 1800 650 890
Visit: https://headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/

Headspace supports young people with mental health, physical health (including sexual health), alcohol and other drug services, as well as 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.

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

Kids Helpline

Hours: 24/7
Call: 1800 55 1800
Visit: https://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.

Beyond Blue

Hours: 24/7
Call: 1300 224 636
Visit: https://www.beyondblue.org.au/

Beyond Blue 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.

Helplines

Lifeline

Hours: 24/7
Call: 13 11 14
Text: 0477 13 11 14
Visit: https://www.lifeline.org.au/

Lifeline 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

Hours: 24/7
Call: 1800 737 732
Visit: https://www.1800respect.org.au

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service. You can contact them by phone or via online chat. 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 have a disability. It's free to call from a landline, payphone and most mobile phones. However, some mobile phone companies do charge for these calls.

Safe Steps

Hours: 24/7
Call: 1800 015 188
Visit: http://www.safesteps.org.au/

Safe Steps provides free specialist support services for anyone in Victoria who is experiencing or afraid of family violence. Their family violence specialists can support you to find safety from domestic abuse.

Sexual Assault Services Victoria – Sexual Assault Crisis Line

Hours: available from 5pm to 9am every day
Call: 1800 806 292
Visit: sasvic.org.au

The Sexual Assault Crisis Line 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. To locate your nearest centre, visit sasvic.org.au.

Rainbow Door

Hours: available 10 am to 5 pm every day
Call: 1800 729 367
Text: 0480 017 246
Visit: www.rainbowdoor.org.au

Rainbow Door is a free specialist LGBTIQA+ helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQA+ Victorians, their friends and family.

Helplines

QLife Victoria
Hours: available 3 pm to midnight every day
Call: 1800 184 527
Visit: www.switchboard.org.au

QLife 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.

Yarning SafeNStrong
Hours: 24/7
Call: 1800 959 563
Visit: ysns@vahs.org.au

Yarning SafeNStrong is a free and confidential counselling service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 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. Also found on Facebook @YarningSafenStrong

Djirra
Hours: available 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday
Call: 1800 105 303
Visit: https://djirra.org.au/

Djirra is an Aboriginal family violence legal service supporting Aboriginal people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence (inclusive of all genders). Djirra also assists non-Aboriginal people experiencing family violence who are parents of Aboriginal children. Calls to Djirra are free.

Elizabeth Morgan House
Hours: 24/7
Call: 1800 364 297
Visit: https://emhaws.org.au

Elizabeth Morgan House is an Aboriginal-led peak body providing family violence services and advocacy for Aboriginal women and children in Victoria. They offer culturally safe services, holistic family violence support to Aboriginal women and their children, as well as partners and ex-partners of Aboriginal people. They also assist with housing, financial difficulties, child protection concerns, school matters, as well as referrals and advocacy to appropriate services, like legal services, medical and health, drug and alcohol counselling, financial counselling and children's services.

All times mentioned above are based on Victorian standard times (AEST and AEDT).

You can find more support and information in the Victorian Government's online resource, **Students – mental health and wellbeing toolkit** https://www.vic.gov.au/students-mental-health-toolkit

The Department of Education has provided information about **programs, support services and other resources** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/resources for LGBTIQA+ students

Topic 05

Activity 2: Pornography, gender and assumptions about intimate relationships

Informed by the evidence base

Gender norms and gender stereotypes are reinforced in the popular media. The media constructs physical and behavioural 'ideals' for both men and women that serve to limit the possibilities that people see for themselves and also work to create unrealistic expectations [60]. Young people need to develop the skills to think critically about potentially harmful or limiting messages that are fostered or reinforced via the media.

Most young people will either accidentally or intentionally encounter online pornography at some time during childhood or early adolescence. [90] Pornography often carries depictions of violence, chiefly by men against women. [91, 92] An analysis of videos from two free porn sites found significant levels of violence targeted at females by predominantly male perpetrators. Videos containing at least one act of aggression made up 45% of videos on Site A and 35% of videos on Site B. Females were the target of aggression in 97% of the scenes and males were perpetrators of aggression in 76% of scenes. [92]

Pornography consumption can influence people's sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. [93, 94] Research shows a significant relationship between high levels of pornography consumption and attitudes which sexually objectify women and are supportive of violence against women. [95] Young men who are regular users of violent pornography are more likely to use violence within their teen dating relationships. [96, 97] However, pornography education interventions can have positive effects with those aged 15 to 19 years less likely to agree post-program that pornography is harmless and a positive way for young people to learn about sex or to agree that violence, slapping, hair pulling and choking are practises enjoyed by most people. [98]

Learning intentions

- Students will think critically about the potential influence of violent pornography on intimate relationships.
- Students will heighten their awareness of how gendered behaviours shown in pornography can shape people's understanding of gender in sexual relationships.

Equipment

- Set of 'Data cards'

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Advise students that this lesson will focus on the influence that pornography can have on the assumptions that people make about intimate relationships. It will focus on what research studies have found and will not include sharing personal stories or experiences. Let students know that it's okay to feel uncomfortable with this material. However, if they think they'll find any of the content distressing, they can choose not to participate in activities or attend an alternative supervised support or study space.
2. Remind students about class ground agreements about respectful and supportive behaviour. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.
3. Acknowledge that pornography is a form of media that some young people encounter either inadvertently or by seeking it out. Some research shows that young people who watch a lot of pornography are more likely to develop unrealistic or harmful expectations about sex and to experience poor modelling about how to have conversations about consent. Violent pornography can also transmit harmful ideas about ways to treat a sexual partner, especially women, trans and gender-diverse people.

4. Define pornography clearly as 'sexually explicit material designed to sexually arouse the viewer or audience'.
5. Explain to students that they have focused previously on how gender identity and norms can develop and this will be useful as they turn their attention to some research which investigates how pornography can influence norms, expectations and behaviour within intimate relationships.
6. Explain that the class will be presented with some key inputs from a range of research studies investigating pornography and its effects on young people. This will involve some volunteers each reading a small piece of data from a data card. Some of the data comes from research interviews conducted with Australian young people which gathers their views on how pornography affects their relationships. Some of it comes from research which investigates the content of common forms of pornography. A third category of research looks at the effects of pornography on people's attitudes and behaviour.
7. Distribute one of the data cards to each volunteer. Ask them to read it and check if it makes sense to them and if they are comfortable to read it aloud. If not, either read it yourself or call for a different volunteer. There are 12 cards. The first 6 carry data from survey-based research conducted with young people and the second 6 carry research data from interviews conducted with Australian young people.
8. Invite the readers to stand across the front of the room, with numbers 1 to 6 on one side, and numbers 7 to 12 on the other. They will present a 'reader's theatre' of data inputs (see 'Coaching point: Why use reader's theatre as a method to share information?' for more information). For logical flow, arrange for cards to be read in sequence according to the number on the card.
9. Following the data presentation, ask students to talk in pairs or small groups to sum up some of the key messages they derived from this research.
    - What do you think were some of the key messages from this collection of research studies?
    - Which gender norms or stereotypes do you think might be reinforced through forms of media which objectify women, or which normalise violence as part of sexual activity?
    - How might this kind of media influence attitudes and practises around consent conversations?

    Invite students to share a summary of their discussions, and in particular their thoughts about the possible influence of various forms of media on consent conversations.
10. Outline that to put their thinking into action, students will work in pairs or small groups to construct advice for a person who is finding it hard to communicate about how they are experiencing unwanted forms of sexual activity or expectations within their relationship.
11. Read or display this letter which has been posted on social media by a young person asking for some advice:

> Hi. I need some advice. My partner wants us to engage in sexual activities that I don't enjoy. I really like my partner, but what they want us to do is way too full on. I think they get their ideas from porn. I end up going along with what they want me to do because I don't want my partner to feel hurt or rejected if I say anything, but I don't feel good about it. Also, I worry they might think I am too hung up if I say anything. What do you think I could do?

12. Provide time for students to discuss and then invite them to report back with their advice.
13. Remind students that if the session raised any concerns for them, it can be helpful to talk with someone. Remind them of the help sources available in the school and refer them to key help sources in the community. Highlight the 'Help-sources' tool that alerts people to a range of help sources and provide additional detail about those services available in the school.
14. Advise students that the next lesson will focus on constructing advice about how to show respect within intimate relationships. Students will discuss scenarios which include forms of gender-based violence within intimate relationships. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask students which aspects of the learning activity were most useful in helping them think critically about the possible influence of violent pornography on expectations within intimate relationships. Ask students to give examples of how the lesson increased their awareness of how gendered behaviours shown in various forms of media can shape people's understanding of what might constitute a respectful relationship.

Coaching point:
Why use reader's theatre as a method to share information? Reader's theatre can be used to present research findings more formally to the class. The formality of the presentation, using an 'academic' or instructional style, helps to invite a critical rather than personal engagement with the findings. The use of different readers can help to sustain interest and concentration. The method also signals clearly that the focus will be on the media's influence on norms, attitudes and behaviour. Conducting this as a group activity also means the teacher is well-positioned to manage the discussion, assist with understanding and responding to the findings and ensure that students do not share personal information.



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.



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Data cards: Some findings from research into pornography use

Input 1: Influence on expectations.

Some researchers investigated the behaviours that heterosexual Australians aged 15 to 29 years saw most often when they watched pornography. The behaviour they saw most frequently was men's pleasure (83%) followed by a man being portrayed as dominant (70%).

Women were more likely to report that they saw violence than men and this may be because they understood and recognised behaviour that constituted an act of violence against women.

Research suggests that this narrative focus on men's pleasure can lead to expectations that sex should mostly be about what men want and that it's the role of women to give pleasure to men.

Source: Davis, A.C., et al., *What behaviours do young heterosexual Australians see in pornography? A cross-sectional study.* The Journal of Sex Research, 2018. **55**(3): p. 310–19.

Input 2: Violence as part of content.

A research study of 4,009 heterosexual scenes from two major heterosexual pornographic sites found that 45% of scenes on one site included at least one act of physical aggression, and on the other site, violence was present in 35% of scenes. The study revealed that:

- women were the victim-survivors of the aggression in 97% of the videos
- men were the perpetrators of aggression against women in 76% of scenes
- aggression often included hitting, choking or hair pulling
- the female characters were often shown as being neutral about the aggression or were portrayed as if they enjoyed the aggressive acts
- women were sometimes shown being violent to other women or to themselves, but not towards men.

The research suggests that this can lead to people assuming that violence by men against women is part of sexual entitlement or pleasure, or that women are sex objects without rights to their own dignity and preferences.

Source: Fritz, N., et al., *A descriptive analysis of the types, targets and relative frequency of aggression in mainstream pornography.* Archives of Sexual Behavior, 2020. **49**(8): p. 3041–53.

Input 3: Influence on ideas about responsibility for protection and contraception.

Researchers who analysed content of videos from a popular heterosexual pornography site found that condoms were used in only 2% of the scenes.

It was suggested that this can lead to people thinking it is not necessary or important to talk about contraception or use of condoms for protection from sexually transmitted infections.

Source: Gorman, S., E. Monk-Turner, and J.N. Fish, *Free adult Internet web sites: how prevalent are degrading acts?* Gender Issues, 2010. 27(3-4): p. 131-145.

Input 4: Influence on behaviour.

A study across 3 years with 10- to 15-year-old Americans, found that intentional exposure to violent pornography over time predicted an almost 6-fold increase in the odds of self-reported sexually aggressive behaviour, whereas exposure to nonviolent 'X-rated' (pornographic) material did not show this result.

Source: Ybarra, M.L., et al., *X-rated material and perpetration of sexually aggressive behavior among children and adolescents: is there a link?* Aggressive Behavior, 2011. **37**(1): p. 1-18..

A study of students in Year 10 who had been dating in the last year showed that boys exposed to violent pornography were 2 to 3 times more likely to report perpetration of sexual violence in their dating relationships than their non-exposed counterparts.

Source: Rostad, W.L., Gittins-Stone, D., Huntington, C., Rizzo, C.J., Pearlman, D., Orchowski, L. *The Association Between Exposure to Violent Pornography and Teen Dating Violence in Grade 10 High School Students.* Archives of Sexual Behaviour. 2019 Oct; 48(7): 2137-2147. DOI: 10.1007/s10508-019-1435-4.

Data cards: Some findings from research into pornography use

Input 5: Influence on self-esteem.

Studies of gay and bisexual men who watch pornography have found that for many it is a useful way for them to learn about sexual relationships and better understand their own identity and sexuality. (1) However, a study with gay and bisexual men who regularly watch pornography found that those who more frequently watched porn were more likely to experience body image distress and to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. (2)

It was suggested that this may happen because viewers can conclude that they are supposed to look a certain way as a gay person if they want to be sexually desired or satisfied. Those who watch more pornography may end up constantly comparing themselves to the actors and become more and more likely to see themselves as not meeting certain body image standards, resulting in higher levels of negative body attitude, anxiety and depression.

Researchers investigating the effects of heterosexual pornography have also found that it can create unrealistic and concerning expectations for both women and men. (3) The men in the research said it led to them feeling insecure about their ability to perform. The women said it led to body image distress.

It was suggested that viewing porn can lead to feelings of inadequacy and to people feeling under pressure to perform or to look in certain ways that are stereotypical and unrealistic.

Source 1: Nelson, K.M., Simoni, J.M., Morrison, D.M., George, WH, Leickly, E., Lengua, L,J., Hawes, S.E. Sexually explicit online media and sexual risk among men who have sex with men in the United States. Archive of Sexual Behaviour. 2014 May; 43(4):833-43. DOI: 10.1007/s10508-013-0238-2. Epub 2014 Jan 24. PMID: 24464547; PMCID: PMC4011997.

Source 2: Whitfield, T.H.F., Rendina, H.J., Grov, C., Parsons, J.T. Viewing Sexually Explicit Media and Its Association with Mental Health Among Gay and Bisexual Men Across the U.S. Archive of Sexual Behaviour. 2018 May; 47 (4):1163-1172. DOI: 10.1007/s10508-017-1045-y. Epub 2017 Sep 7. PMID: 28884272; PMCID: PMC5842099.

Source 3: Lofgren-Mårtenson, L. and S.A. Månsson, *Lust, love, and life: a qualitative study of Swedish adolescents' perceptions and experiences with pornography*. Journal of Sex Research, 2010. **47**(6): p. 568-79.

Input 6: Influence on sexual behaviour.

A study found that exposure to pornographic material at 13 years of age increases the likelihood that both boys and girls will engage earlier in oral sex and sexual intercourse than their peers who did not watch pornography. This study also found that males who were exposed to sexually explicit material in early adolescence were more likely to engage in sexual harassment in middle adolescence.

Source: Brown, J.D., L'Engle, K.L. X-Rated: Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors Associated with U.S. Early Adolescents' Exposure to Sexually Explicit Media. *Communication Research*. 2009;36(1):129-151. DOI:10.1177/0093650208326465

Input 7: Interview with Elise (17).

It can give boys lots of [ideas] depending on the porn because there's some pretty disgusting stuff out there. The boys made me watch [lists a film]. I'm sure pretty much everyone's [seen it] … it's pretty much girls doing the most vile things … and all this disgusting stuff. I'm sure there's some really disgusting boys that get ideas from that.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Input 8: Interview with Molly (16).

A friend of mine is in a relationship with a boy, and he watches porn on the internet and the first time they decided to have sex together he decided that to get off he would like [lists pornographic act]. You know part of me thought well how does he know that this is something that's attractive to him, but obviously he's watched it and for some reason that's excited him, but I don't think I'd want that to be my first time.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Data cards: Some findings from research into pornography use

Input 9: Interview with Joe (16).

It's crazy … because it's very theatrical and very out there and sometimes quirky … and they think, 'I can do that to a girl because that would be alright'. Then they do it and then they hurt them or rape them … I think it's a big problem, sexting, porn, all of it. It's just a big problem. I think no one's looking at it seriously.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Input 10: Interview with Harry (18).

I was listening to [the radio] last night … and they were interviewing all these girls who were doing things they didn't want to, because their boyfriends saw it in porn. They do that, 'I thought you loved me', thing. I've seen it happen a lot at school … yeah it's almost a threat … 'If you don't do this, if you don't do that'.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Input 11: Interview with Jaimee (17).

In a lot of cases [porn] is really quite disgusting and full on … I've seen some really gross stuff … I've been shown by friends that are guys … like your friend comes up and [goes] 'Oh, look at this, look at this, it's really funny', and then starts playing and you're like 'Whoa, hang on' … people are like 'Look at it' and I'd be like 'Oh, gross, put it away'.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Input 12: Interview with Camille (20).

There's things porn stars do that people talk about trying … things like [lists pornographic act] … I think that would be horrible personally. But pornography is making it okay. Boys think females should do it because porn stars do it.

Source: Walker, S., Temple-Smith, M., Higgs, P., & Sanci, L. (2015). 'It's always just there in your face': young people's views on porn. *Sexual Health*, 12(3), 200-206.

Topic 05

Activity 3: Respectful behaviour within sexual relationships

Informed by the evidence base

Romantic relationships have been shown to have positive impacts on young people's sense of identity and psychosocial wellbeing. [99-101] However, they are also a common cause of distress. In Australia, dating and partner relationships are among the 6 most common reasons for calls made to Kids Helpline. [102] In late adolescence, it is common for romantic relationships to become more intense and committed [103] and for partners to engage in sexual activity with each other. [104] Australian data suggests that by Year 12 over half of students have engaged in sexual intercourse, with girls (58.6%) more likely than boys (52.9%), and trans and gender-diverse students less likely (46.2%). Having given or received oral sex was reported by 50% of students in Year 12. [104] Studies also show 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 and around a third reported they had also perpetrated some form of intimate partner abuse [105]. It is important therefore that young people have the opportunity to identify how to show respect within dating relationships and during relationship breakups.

Learning intention

- Students will devise a guide containing advice about ways to show respect within romantic or sexual relationships.

Equipment

- 'Respectful relationships' behaviour prompts

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Outline that this lesson will take a proactive approach to constructing advice about how to show respect within intimate relationships. Students will be working in small groups to construct advice about things like how to break up respectfully, how to talk about your boundaries in a new relationship and how to interact online.

   Remind students they can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

2. Arrange students into groups of 3 or 4. Explain that each group will be allocated a prompt relating to respectful behaviour within relationships. Their task is to make two piles of suggestions, one containing dos and the other containing don'ts. These suggestions will help to build a guide to respectful intimate relationships and to the prevention of gender-based violence.
3. Give each group a respectful relationships behaviour prompt.

Respectful relationships behaviour prompts	
How to treat an intimate partner with respect within your digital communications	How to handle rejection by showing respect for yourself and for the other person
How to start a consent conversation	How to break up respectfully
How to start talking about contraception and protection from sexually transmitted infections	How to say no respectfully when someone wants to hook up with you
Another topic as decided by the task group	

4. Allocate time for groups to consider their card and complete their advice around dos and don'ts.

5. Once each group has completed their lists, they should present their topic and their dos and don'ts lists to the class. As the groups contribute and explain their suggestions, look to see where consistent strategies have appeared across the situations and where there are inconsistencies. Use the following questions to prompt discussion:

- Are the differences occurring in relation to the nature of the scenarios, or because people have different views about how to create and enact respectful relationships?
- Where are there points of difficulty or tension? Where is there a sense of strong agreement?
- What are the values or attitudes that underpin these suggestions?
- Do these sets of advice apply in the same way for people regardless of their gender or sexuality?
- What personal strengths and interpersonal communication skills might it take to live into these standards?

Review

Ask students to reflect on what they learned in the activity. Reflect on the learning intentions by asking students whether the activity has influenced their confidence to talk to other young people about how to show respect within relationships.



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

6. Provide some content advice for upcoming lessons in Topic 6: Help-seeking. Alert students that in the upcoming sessions they will focus on help-seeking, and as part of this consider scenarios where characters are dealing with stressful or challenging situations, like money problems, violence or conflict in the home, feeling left out or lonely in friendship situations, dealing with bullying, body shaming or racist treatment by peers, dealing with sexual harassment or sexual assault or generally feeling anxious or depressed. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.



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.

Reflecting on everyday practise

Reflect on how members of the school community react and intervene when they hear abusive comments which are sexist, homophobic or transphobic in nature.

Ask yourself:

- are these forms of commentary allowed to pass without others signalling that they are unacceptable?
- how is diversity valued and respected in the school?

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk with respected adults, parents or carers about what they believe a couple should do to show respect for each other.
- Ask what effects they think it has if a person remains in an abusive, disrespectful or violent relationship.

Optional game

The Robot and Controller Game works well to raise topic-related themes like the effect of abuse of power over another. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.

Relevant statistics on gender-based violence

Data card 1:

How common is it for people to experience violence from a current or previous partner?

- 1 in 5 (17%) women and 1 in 16 (6.1%) men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since age 18.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data card 2:

How common is it for people to observe harassment of people of diverse sexualities or genders at school?

- 54% of surveyed 13- to 18-year-old Australian students report witnessing verbal harassment of gender and sexuality diverse students at school.

Source: Ullman, J. (2021), Free to Be...Yet?: The second national study of Australian high school students who identify as gender and sexuality diverse. Centre for Educational Research, School of Education, Western Sydney University, Penrith.

Data card 3:

How common is it for people to report experiencing emotional abuse by a current or past partner?

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 20 (4.7%) men report experiencing emotional abuse by a current or past partner since the age of 15.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data card 4:

How common is it for people to experience both financial abuse and emotional abuse by a past partner?

- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 3 men who report experiencing emotional abuse by a past partner also report experiencing financial abuse.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data card 5:

How common is it for people who have been physically assaulted to believe that alcohol or drugs had been involved in their most recent incident of physical assault?

- 50% of women and 61% of men aged 18 years and over who experienced physical assault believed that alcohol or another substance contributed to their most recent incident.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Crime Victimisation, Australia, 2017–18

Data card 6:

How common is it for women to experience sexual violence?

- Very common, especially in more recent times. An Australian study of 57,000 women found that in 2019, 51% of women in their twenties, 34% of women in their forties and 26% of women aged 68 to 73 at had experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

Source: Townsend, N., Loxton, D., Egan, N., Barnes, I., Byrnes, E., & Forder, P. (2022). A life course approach to determining the prevalence and impact of sexual violence in Australia: Findings from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health. ANROWS.

Relevant statistics on gender-based violence

Data card 7:

How common is it for women to experience sexual assault by someone they know?

- In the most recently reported incident of sexual assault by a male, 87% of women experienced sexual assault by a male they knew.
- The location of the most recent incident was most likely to be in the woman's home (40%) or in the perpetrator's home (17%)
- Most women, almost 9 out of 10 (87%), did not contact the police.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data card 8:

How common is it for people to experience sexual harassment?

- 1 in 2 (53%) women and 1 in 4 men (25%) report being sexually harassed since the age of 15.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data card 9:

Are younger or older people more likely to experience sexual harassment?

- For both men and women, younger age groups were more likely than older people to experience sexual harassment. Approximately 38% of women and 16% of men aged 18 to 24 years had experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data card 10:

How common is it for people to experience stalking?

- 1 in 6 women (17%) and 1 in 15 men (6.5%) experienced an episode of stalking since the age of 15.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data card 11:

How common is it for people to experience physical or sexual abuse before the age of 15?

- 1 in 6 women (16%) and 1 in 10 men (11%) aged 18 years and over experienced abuse before the age of 15.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data card 12:

How common is it for people to experience image-based abuse?

- 1 in 3 people aged 16 to 19 (31%) were the victim of at least one form of image-based abuse (1).
- 12% of 10- to 19-year-olds report forwarding a sext without consent (2).

Source:

Henry, N., Powell, A. & Flynn, A. 2017. Not just 'revenge pornography': Australians' experiences of image-based abuse. A summary report. Melbourne: RMIT University in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Klettke, B., Hallford, D. J., & Mellor, D. J. (2014) Sexting prevalence and correlates: A systematic literature review. Clinical Psychology Review, 34(1), 44–53.

Relevant statistics on gender-based violence

Data card 13:

How common is it for people to experience being coerced to send a sext?

- 52.3% of girls and 23.3% of boys report at least one coercive motivation for sending a sext
- 33% of girls and 15% of boys said they gave in and sent a sext after repeatedly being asked.

Source: Reed, L. A., Boyer, M. P., Meskunas, H., Tolman, R. M., & Ward, L. M. (2020). How do adolescents experience sexting in dating relationships? Motivations to sext and responses to sexting requests from dating partners. Children and Youth Services Review, 109, 104696.

Data card 14:

How common is it for people to be physically assaulted by someone they know?

- 66% of men reporting on their most recent experience of physical assault said they were assaulted by a male stranger in a place of recreation, leisure or outside
- Women are more likely to experience physical assault by someone known to them (92%) and most commonly in their own home (65%).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data card 15:

How common is it for people of diverse sexuality to experience workplace sexual harassment?

- 52% of those who identify as of diverse sexuality report experiencing workplace sexual harassment as compared to 31% of heterosexual identifying people.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.



Topic 06 Help-seeking and peer referral in response to gender-based violence

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify sources of help, support or advice
- develop skills in seeking help, support or advice in a range of situations and from a range of sources
- normalise help-seeking behaviour
- practise help-seeking in an emergency situation.

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 is one way to improve mental health and wellbeing. [106] 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 Torres Strait Islander young people. [107] For relevant statistics on the prevalence of different forms of gender-based violence, see the cards at the end of this resource.

Research demonstrates that help-seeking attitudes are influenced by gender norms, with males less likely to indicate that they would seek help than females. [108] Further, those from marginalised communities including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, [109] religious or cultural minorities [110] and those who identify as LGBTQI+ [111] 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 young people need to seek support as well as the knowledge about where to find appropriate help services.

Topic 06

Activity 1: Help-seeking, peer support and peer referral in response to gender-based violence

Informed by the evidence base

There are a number of psychosocial, cultural and practical barriers that young people can face when it comes to seeking help about sensitive issues including mental, social, sexual, family or financial distress. [112] Common barriers include a sense of shame, anxiety about confidentiality and possible negative outcomes following disclosures, belief that one should exert independence and solve personal problems without assistance and anxiety about possible inadequate or judgemental approaches on the part of those they turn to for help. Data collected from 18,800 15 to 19-year-olds in 2022 found that nearly a third (31.2%) said they find it hard to turn to friends and family when they need help despite that in general these people are their main source of support in their lives. [4] The study also found that over half (53.4%) reported that they had needed support with their mental health at some point. 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 they had used were a health professional (68.1%), family (55.4%) and 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%). [4] This study also found that around half (51.5%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people reported they had needed support with their mental health in their lives with a larger proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females reporting this (62.7%) compared with males (35%). Among those who sought help, 57.7% said they most commonly sought help for mental health issues from a health professional (62.1%), family (49.4%) or friends (46%). Those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who did not seek the support they needed with mental health problems cited the top 3 barriers as stigma or shame associated with mental illness (45.9%), not knowing where to go for help (39.5%) and concerns about confidentiality (35.5%). Face to face was the preferred method of accessing professional mental health support for 45.9% of this group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Research has also demonstrated that it can be the people who most need help who are least likely to feel that they can enter a help-seeking pathway[113]. Therefore, it is important to work with students to build skills for proactive peer support and peer referral, as well as to normalise help-seeking as a legitimate action.

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.

Learning intentions

- Students will develop strategies that can be used to communicate boundaries, seek safety and access support in a range of different situations involving gender-based violence.
- Students will rehearse help-seeking and peer support strategies that may be employed in responding to an incident of gender-based violence.

Equipment

- 'No, Go, Tell, Change' model
- 'Help needed' scenarios
- 'Help-sources' tool page 111

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Provide students with content advice. Explain that they will work on scenarios with others to give help-seeking advice to characters who are dealing with distressing situations, like money problems, violence or conflict in the home; feeling left out or lonely in friendship situations; dealing with bullying, body shaming or racist treatment by peers; dealing with sexual harassment or sexual assault, or generally feeling anxious or depressed. Let students know that it's okay to feel uncomfortable. However, if they think they'll find any of the content distressing, they can choose to modify their participation in activities or attend an alternative supervised support or study space as appropriate.

   Remind students they can also help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

2. Conduct a quick brainstorm with the class, asking students to identify some of the barriers to help-seeking, and some of the drivers that can positively influence help-seeking actions. Invite inclusion of any heightened or additional barriers that might present for those in marginalised communities, or as a result of gender norms.

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. [84] In response to structural and cultural barriers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, [109] those from religious and cultural minorities, [114] and those who identify as LGBTIQ+ [111] 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 the 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 socio-economic 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.

3. Explain that students will address their selected scenario and work together to devise strategies that the victimised person could use to engage in help-seeking, either with support of a friend or on their own.
4. Before commencing the task, introduce the 'No, Go, Tell, Change' model.

'No, Go, Tell, Change' model for safety, self-care and change in situations involving gender-based violence.

No

Say no: let the aggressor or aggressors know that their actions are not okay and you want them to stop.

Go

Seek Safety: if this does not stop, seek safety (leave, call for help, distract attention).

Tell

Tell someone: once you are in a safer place, tell someone about what has happened, including if you were threatened and the threat was not carried out.

Change

Work with others for social change: be part of broader efforts to prevent or redress the effects of gender-based violence.

5. Acknowledge that sometimes people have limited power to enact the No and Go steps in this model. The Tell step is a key way to get meaningful support even if it is long after the event. It is so important to let someone know what has happened, how this has affected them and to seek support.
6. Divide students into small groups. Provide access to the scenarios, the 'No, Go, Tell, Change' model and the 'Help-sources' tool. Invite groups to choose a scenario and develop a set of responses to the questions:
   - What effects might this situation have on the person?
   - Who could they tell?
   - Where could they go to get help?
   - Who might assist them to engage in some form of help-seeking?
   - What might help-seeking sound like?

7. Bring groups back together to introduce their scenario and present their suggestions. Encourage others to question, critique or add.
8. After the different groups have presented, map the strategies that seemed to be useful across multiple situations.
9. Ask students to comment on what peers can do to assist each other in situations like those represented in the scenarios. Record the suggested peer support or peer referral strategies.
10. Remind students that if the session raised any concerns for them, it can be helpful to talk with someone. Remind them of the help sources available in the school and refer them to key help sources in the community. Highlight the 'Help-sources' tool that alerts people to a range of help sources.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Ask students to comment on which aspects of the learning activity helped to equip them with help-seeking strategies that can be used in response to situations of gender-based violence.



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

11. Explain that in the next lesson the class will focus on situations where peers turn to each other for help. They will identify strategies a friend could use to talk with someone who has perpetrated gender-based violence in a situation involving alcohol use. They will also consider what someone who has sexually assaulted a peer might need to learn (or unlearn) to not do this again. The class will discuss a scenario where a young woman was sexually assaulted at a party while unconscious, following heavy alcohol use. They will also encounter some data about the frequency with which sexual violence also involves alcohol use. Point out that this is a sensitive topic. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.

Coaching point:

Privacy and support. These scenarios are designed to enable the class to discuss situations where various forms of gender-based harassment or violence occur. They help to focus on what effect this situation may have on the victim, what a victim can do to make their boundaries clear and what onlookers can do to show support for these boundaries or to make it clear that society also sets boundaries to protect people from gender-based violence. These scenarios are created with young people in mind, set in contexts that are relevant to them. Students should not be asked to reveal or share their own experiences on this topic in the public space of the classroom. Invite those who wish to follow up about a concern to talk either with a teacher or wellbeing staff or other trusted adults, or to access a telephone support line (see the 'Help-sources' tool) or a GP.

An up-to-date list of support services for students can be found on the Department of Education's Policy and Advisory Library, including resources about

Family Violence Support https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/family-violence-support/resources,

Sexuality and Consent Education https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/sexuality-education/resources as well as **programs, support services and other resources** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/resources for LGBTIQA+ students.

You can find more support and information in the Victorian Government's online resource, **Students – mental health and wellbeing toolkit** https://www.vic.gov.au/students-mental-health-toolkit

Please ensure this information is provided to students.

The 'Help-sources' tool for students can also be found on page 111 of this resource.



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.

Help needed scenarios

Questions:

- What effects might this situation have on the person?
- Is the gender or sexuality of the person or persons relevant to how the situation might affect them?
- What might happen if they don't seek support?
- How could peers help?
- Where else could they go to get help?

Scenario 1

Nuying (19) continued to feel distressed after a relationship break-up. Nuying had initiated the break-up because Rodan (21) had become too controlling and increasingly pressured Nuying to engage sexually in ways that were not okay for Nuying. The abusive comments escalated after the break-up, with Rodan circulating nasty and untrue stories about their sexual experiences.

Scenario 2

Ruby (18) has a part-time job working for Bruce (42), an old school friend of her father. Bruce has started to pay a lot of attention to Ruby, which at first she thought was just friendly and so she was friendly back. After a few weeks, Bruce started to touch Ruby when her colleagues were out at lunch and make sexual comments about her breasts. One evening he told Ruby he needed her to work late. When she took some papers into his office, Bruce pulled her on to his lap and told her he had been wanting to get her alone ever since she started working for him.

Scenario 3

Matteo (17) showed Mike and Mohammed (both 17) some porn sites, holding his laptop under the desk where they could watch without the teacher noticing. Then he passed the laptop to Mia and Larissa (both 17), with a note he had written, telling them that Mohammed wanted to do the same stuff with them. Mia shrieked when she saw it, yelled at Matteo and Mohammed and pushed the laptop away.

Scenario 4

Harper (14) told her cousin Dana (17) that she had a secret boyfriend. She wouldn't tell Dana anything about him, just that she had met him online. A week later, as Dana was walking home from school, she saw Harper get into a car with a man who looked at least 30 years old and the two of them kissed before driving off.

Scenario 5

Pedro (17) confided to Ray (17) that he had a bad experience at his cousin's 21st birthday and has had trouble sleeping ever since because it keeps coming back into his mind. When Ray asked what happened, Pedro said he hooked up with a guy who seemed really nice, but then they were violent and abused him. He refused to say anymore, saying it was too hard to talk about what happened. Ray could see that Pedro was really distressed.

Scenario 6

Jedda (18) arrived at school one day looking distressed after a sleepless night. She told her friends about being assaulted while she was travelling home on public transport the previous day. The space was crowded and some young men deliberately surrounded her and touched her on her breasts and butt. Jedda froze, feeling shocked, but no one else seemed to notice what was going on. She was too scared to get off at her own station in case they got off and followed her, so she ended up going to the end of the line and back to avoid them.

Topic 06

Activity 2: Alcohol, respect and positive peer intervention following violence

Informed by the evidence base

The connection between alcohol use and violence is complex because it involves intersections between the people, places and the social contexts within which alcohol is used, as well as the amount of the drug consumed and the reasons for its use. [115] Places and contexts are relevant, because social and gender norms play a part in how people behave when they are drinking. For example, masculinity norms around heavy drinking, prior exposure to violence, sexual entitlement and sexual prowess can all intersect to produce a higher propensity for someone to perpetrate sexual violence [116]. The social norms of the context can influence how people behave when drinking. For example, in settings where heavy alcohol use is normalised, such as at parties, nightclubs and bars, there can also be a degree of social acceptance of behaviour that would not be tolerated elsewhere. [115] In these situations, bystanders may ignore or excuse behaviour or even applaud or encourage the forms of violent or sexually predatory behaviour that they would not tolerate elsewhere. [115] In these situations, peers may play a part in permitting, excusing or encouraging violence.

Studies have shown that alcohol use alone does not cause violence, however, among those men who are violent towards partners, alcohol consumption exacerbates their violence [117]. Additionally, a review of 28 studies which investigated the effects of alcohol on dating violence perpetration among young people aged 11 to 21 years found that those who drink at higher levels or more frequently are more likely to perpetrate dating violence [117]. Alcohol can be understood as an accelerating factor in the perpetration of violence against partners.

Research investigating intimate partner violence finds that alcohol consumption is often used as an excuse for violence, with the offender blaming being under the influence, rather than taking responsibility for being violent, abusing or assaulting their partner. [118] Victims of violence may also blame the alcohol, rather than the offender. For some this is a way to cope with the experience of violence, as it can then seem like alcohol, rather than their partner, is the cause of the problem. [118] Alcohol use can lead to people denying or excusing violent behaviour.

Gender norms also play a role in influencing the way people excuse violence perpetrated in situations where alcohol is used. Some gender norms lead people to ascribe blame to the victim-survivors of sexual violence, rather than to locate the responsibility with the perpetrator of the crime. There are a number of commonly held sexual assault myths arising from gender stereotypes. These myths work to minimise or justify the actions of the perpetrator and feed victim-blaming scripts. Some common myths include:

- 'She wanted it, or liked it'
- 'He didn't mean to and/or couldn't control himself'
- 'Rape is not a serious or harmful thing'
- 'Rape is a very rare event, so this was probably not a rape' [71]

Research has demonstrated that men tend attribute higher levels of blame to victims than women and have a higher level accepting these myths about rape than women. [71]

Those who hold stereotypical views about gender roles are more likely to place the blame for sexual assault onto girls and women particularly in situations where the victim-survivor has used alcohol. [71] In contrast, men who perpetrate rape are more likely to be excused if they have been drinking. [71]

To sum up, the effects of alcohol on people's likelihood to perpetrate violence, including sexual violence, is complex. It can be understood as an intersection between:

- the amount of alcohol consumed
- the drinker and their beliefs (such as sexual entitlement, beliefs that men have the right to initiate sex, beliefs that violence is a legitimate way to exert control or assumptions that they should have control over their partner)
- the drinker and their reason for drinking (such as to impress, to excuse their behaviour, to build confidence or to assert one's self over others)
- the degree to which the place itself offers the opportunity to get away with violence.

Learning intentions

- Students will engage with research investigating the ways alcohol use can intersect with negative gender norms to endorse, contribute to or excuse forms of gender-based violence.
- Students will identify strategies through which to intervene or communicate with a peer about their use of sexually abusive behaviour in situations involving alcohol use.

Coaching point:
Positive peer leadership. Point out that calling someone out for a wrongdoing can also be understood as a form of peer leadership, particularly if it is done in a mature and responsible way. Bystanders or observers can make a difference by showing leadership and becoming upstanders who intervene in a positive way, either during the situation or as part of a proactive follow up to help the affected parties. What they say or do might help to create a more positive future for someone.

Equipment

- 'Alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault' tool

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Provide students with content advice. Explain that in this lesson students will identify strategies to intervene or communicate with a peer about their use of sexually abusive behaviour in situations involving alcohol use. They will also consider what a young person who has sexually assaulted a peer might need to learn or unlearn to ensure they don't commit an assault like this again. Students will be presented with a scenario which outlines this situation and some inputs from research that discuss the complex ways that peer norms, attitudes, alcohol, gender norms and violence can intersect. They will then discuss the options a close family member or friend might consider in a follow-up conversation with the young person who has been sexually violent by having sexual intercourse with someone without their consent. The class will also consider some data about the frequency of sexual violence in situations involving alcohol use.
2. Acknowledge that this is a sensitive topic. Let students know that it's okay to feel uncomfortable. However, if they think they'll find any of the content distressing, they can choose not to participate in activities, arrange to attend an alternative supervised support or study space. Remind students about the importance of providing a supportive space for each other while the class considers this issue.

   Facilitate student choices in a considerate manner. Support students to make choices about their participation during lessons, even if a plan was not made before the lesson.
3. Share the following information with students.

It is common for young people to experience aggression or injury in situations involving alcohol use. For example, in 2019, more than a third (34%) of people aged 18 to 24 had been the victim of a harmful alcohol-related incident in the previous 12 months, including physical injury, verbal abuse and being put in fear for their safety.

Of 'risky drinkers' aged 14 to19 years, 83% reported that in the past 12 months they had been injured as a result of their drinking and 7% had attended the emergency department for an alcohol-related injury. Risky drinking involves consuming more than 10 standard drinks a week and/or more than 4 standard drinks in one day. (1)

Additionally, data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that sexual assaults often happen in situations where alcohol is being used and occur most commonly in homes or residential locations. For example, in the most recently reported upon incidents of sexual assault by a male perpetrator experienced by women:

- 50% believed alcohol or another substance contributed
- 70% were sexually assaulted at a home or a residential location
- only 50% sought advice or support after the most recent incident, most commonly from a friend or family member (71%).

Sources:
(1) https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/phe/221/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia/contents/impacts/health-impacts

(2) Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics about sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, including characteristics of victim-survivors, victimisation rates and police reporting. Data released 24/08/2021 from surveys conducted in 2016 and 2019. https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/sexual-violence-victimisation

4. Acknowledge that alcohol is often blamed for sexual violence but reiterate that the reality is more complex than a simple cause and effect, with attitudes, alcohol use, gender norms and setting or context all intersecting to make it more or less likely that people will excuse or enact violence, and more or less likely that they will intervene to prevent it or to follow up with a perpetrator to challenge their behaviour. They will engage with this complexity via a scenario, and some supporting inputs and questions derived from research into the intersections between alcohol and violence.
5. Read the scenario to the class.

> A group of friends are at and end of term party with their Year 11 class at the home of one of the class members. A small group has been drinking heavily. Tess and Bruce see that Anika has passed out and move her to a bedroom to sleep it off. They go to check on her because they're worried about the risk of her throwing up and choking. Their classmate Regi is pulling up his jeans as they arrive. It's clear that he's also been drinking and it seems from the fact that Anika's undies are pulled down near her knees that he might have sexually assaulted Anika, who isn't conscious.
>
> Over the next few days Tess and Bruce help Anika to get some support from a doctor and a counsellor.
>
> They contact Angus, the 20-year-old brother of Regi, to tell him that they think Regi sexually assaulted Anika at a party. Angus is initially shocked because he didn't think his brother was someone who would do this. However, Tess and Bruce explain what happened and it becomes clear to Angus that Regi may have assaulted Anika. Tess and Bruce insist that Angus must sort out his younger brother so that this doesn't happen again.
>
> Angus can see how serious this is, but he is struggling to know what to do. He asks his brother about the party and Regi says he got with a girl called Anni or Anette or something like that. He said she was up for anything and the party was great. Angus goes online to gather some research about alcohol and sexual violence and shares what he found with some close friends, asking them for advice about how to talk about this with his brother. Rather than giving him advice, they posed a set of questions.

6. Explain that the class will engage with some relevant research inputs and the peer questions posed by Angus's friends to co-construct some advice for Angus about how he might talk with his brother.
7. Arrange for some volunteers to collectively read out the 10 research inputs and supporting peer questions (see the 'Alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault' tool provided).
8. Following the reading, ask students to brainstorm what some of the thoughts or feelings Angus might have about opening a conversation with his brother.
   - What might he be afraid of?
   - What might he be hoping for?
   - What strengths might he need to draw on to conduct a conversation about this?
9. Provide an opportunity for students to either elect to work on their own, with a partner or in small groups to discuss their responses to the scenario, the research inputs and peer questions they have just heard. Provide the key questions to guide their conversations:
   - Having considered these research inputs and peer questions, what learning or unlearning do you think it is most likely that Regi needs to do?
   - What contribution do you think his older brother might be able to make?
   - What sorts of things might Angus say to his brother?
   - What other actions or options might be useful to Angus or Regi?
   - Which help sources might Angus or Regi use?
   - What similarities or differences do you see when comparing this scenario to one where peers or siblings find that someone close to them has been perpetrating abuse online following a relationship break-up?
10. Provide an opportunity for the groups to report back on their key observations or insights.

Coaching point:
Advancing restorative approaches. Anti-violence programs often focus on the needs of the victim-survivor or the observers, however, some students will also identify as having used violence themselves. It's important therefore to also include learning activities that focus on what someone who used violence can do to take responsibility for what they have done, to engage in restorative efforts, show their remorse and change their behaviour.

11. Remind students that if the session raised any concerns for them, it can be helpful to talk with someone. Remind them of the help sources available in the school and refer them to key help sources in the community. Highlight the 'Help-sources' tool that alerts people to a range of help sources and provide additional detail about those services available in the school.

Review

Invite the class to review the learning intentions. Ask students to talk to the person next to them about what they learned in this activity and to share thoughts about the kinds of strengths that a concerned peer or sibling might need to call someone out for their abusive behaviour.



Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

12. Explain that the next lesson will focus further on the different kinds of help sources available to use in response to a range of life challenges, including challenges associated with stress, mental health problems, emotional distress, sexual assault and family violence. Students can help each other by providing a supportive environment. Urge students to be mindful that at any given time there are many people dealing with challenging issues. It's important for everyone to be considerate in the way they discuss situations of this nature.



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.

Alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault tool

Research-informed inputs about the intersection between alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault	Peer questions to inform conversations with a perpetrator of sexual assault
Research input 1: Research shows that alcohol is not itself the cause of violence, as many people who drink never get violent. However, violence is more common when people drink to excess, and people who use violence when sober may be even more inclined to do so when they are drunk, possibly due to disinhibiting factors of the drug. **Source:** Rothman, E. F., McNaughton Reyes, L., Johnson, R. M., & LaValley, M. (2012). Does the alcohol make them do it? Dating violence perpetration and drinking among youth. Epidemiol Rev, 34(1), 103–119. https://doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxr027	**Peer question 1:** Is your brother taking responsibility for how alcohol affects him? If so, what does he need to learn?
Research input 2: Alcohol does not cause sexual violence, as most people who drink never sexually assault anyone. However, people who feel a sense of sexual entitlement, or hold attitudes that objectify or sexualise women, may be even more likely to perpetrate sexual harassment or sexual assault when they have been drinking. **Source**: Taft, A., Wilson, I., Laslett, A. M., & Kuntsche, S. (2019). Pathways to responding and preventing alcohol-related violence against women: why a gendered approach matters. Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 43(6), 516–518. https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.12943	**Peer question 2:** Is your brother assuming that just because he wants to have sex with someone he can? If so, what does he need to learn?
Research input 3: Some people use situations where large amounts of alcohol are consumed to deliberately seek out opportunities for sex, knowing that this may make it easy for them to exert power or control over others who may not be in a fit state to make a consenting choice. **Source**: Javaid, A. (2015). The role of alcohol in intimate partner violence: Causal behaviour or excusing behaviour? British Journal of Community Justice, 13(1), 75–92.	**Peer question 3:** Did your brother deliberately take advantage of someone in a vulnerable state as an easy way get what he wants? If so, what does he need to learn or unlearn?
Research input 4: Some people use alcohol use as an excuse for their own behaviour, as if to say, 'I was drunk, so I didn't know what I was doing.' However, a person is not excused from committing a crime like sexual assault or drink driving because of their own alcohol use. People around them can also excuse violence when someone has been drinking, preferring to blame the alcohol rather than the offender. Source: Javaid, A. (2015). The role of alcohol in intimate partner violence: Causal behaviour or excusing behaviour? British Journal of Community Justice, 13(1), 75–92.	**Peer question 4:** Do you think that your brother might be using alcohol as an excuse for his actions? Might his friends also be excusing him because they think his actions can be blamed on the alcohol? Are your brother and his friends putting the blame on Anika for being drunk?

Alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault tool

Research input 5: Some males have peers who pressure them to use a social event to demonstrate that they are a particular stereotype of a 'man' by finding a partner and having sex with them. Research shows that sexual violence is more likely when people are in social and alcohol-laden environments where certain predatory behaviours are accepted or even actively encouraged by others, even though these same behaviours would not be acceptable in other settings (for example, when the same people are at work or school). **Source**: Plant, M., Plant, M., & Thornton, C. (2002). People and Places: some factors in the alcohol-violence link. Journal of Substance Use, 7(4), 207–213. https://doi.org/10.1080/14659890215690	**Peer question 5:** Do you think your brother is affected by peer pressure? Is he hanging around with the wrong people or trying to prove himself to his male peers rather than thinking about what is actually right? If so, what does he need to unlearn?
Research input 6: Some people believe that if someone is drunk they have chosen to be sexually available. However, this is a rape myth which has been shaped by unequal gender norms. Rape myths include the false beliefs that women are deliberately making themselves sexually available when they have been drinking heavily, that they are to blame for not protecting themselves from predators or that they actually want to be forced into sex. Research shows that due to the influence of gender stereotypes, men are more likely to hold victim-blaming attitudes than women and have a higher level of rape myth acceptance than women. **Source:** Grubb, A., & Turner, E. (2012). Attribution of blame in rape cases: A review of the impact of rape myth acceptance, gender role conformity and substance use on victim blaming. Aggression and Violent Behaviour, 17(5), 443–452. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2012.06.002	**Peer question 6:** Does your brother need to question whether he has taken on some of these rape myths and need to challenge the assumptions he has made as a result? If so, what does he need to learn?
Research input 7: Some people are influenced by what they have seen when viewing pornography. Some men think it's acceptable to dominate and sexually violate women or arrive at the false assumption that this behaviour is 'what women really want'. This can create sexual entitlement or the belief that they have the right to expect access to someone's body for their own pleasure, even if that's not what the other person wants. **Source:** Rostad, W.L., et al., *The Association Between Exposure to Violent Pornography and Teen Dating Violence in Grade 10 High School Students.* Archive of Sexual Behaviour, 2019. 48(7): p. 2137-2147.	**Peer question 7:** Do you think your brother has got these ideas from porn? If so, what does he need to unlearn?
Research input 8: Some people are not aware that sexual assault laws clearly state that consent must be sought and that people who are not in a fit state cannot give consent (for example, when very drunk or unconscious). **Source:** Politoff, V., Crabbe, M., Honey, N., Mannix, S., Mickle, J., Morgan, J., Parkes, A., Powell, A., Stubbs, J., Ward, A., & Webster, K., (2019). Young Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality: Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) (ANROWS Insights, Issue 01/2019). Sydney: ANROWS.	**Peer question 8:** Do you think your brother understands what the law says about sexual assault? If not, what does he need to learn?

Alcohol use, gender attitudes and perpetration of sexual assault tool

Research input 9: It's more common for people who mainly have men as friends to think it's okay to sexually harass women. This may be because they don't look at what it might be like for the woman and they don't see it as a problem. They may have not yet developed enough empathy or imagination to consider how this kind of violence might affect women.

Source: Politoff, V., Crabbe, M., Honey, N., Mannix, S., Mickle, J., Morgan, J., Parkes, A., Powell, A., Stubbs, J., Ward, A., & Webster, K., (2019). Young Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality: Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) (ANROWS Insights, Issue 01/2019). Sydney: ANROWS.

Peer question 9:

Do you think your brother needs to establish some friendships with girls and develop his ability to think about things from their perspective? If so, what does he need to learn?

Research input 10: Some people who are violent towards others don't admit responsibility for their actions and don't feel remorse. Others do feel shame and regret and fully accept that they have done the wrong thing. However, they don't always know what the right thing is to do next, like whether they should apologise or try to find a way to make up for what they have done.

Source: Hashimoto, N., P. Radcliffe, and G. Gilchrist, *Help-Seeking Behaviors for Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration by Men Receiving Substance Use Treatment: A Mixed-Methods Secondary Analysis.* Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 2021. 36(7-8): p. 3142-3167.

Peer question 10:

Do you think that deep down your brother knows that what he has done is wrong and that he is ashamed? If so, what could he do?

Topic 06

Activity 3: Know your help sources

Informed by the evidence base

Young people note that for them to make use of health services to deal with sensitive issues affecting their wellbeing or safety, these services must be accessible, affordable and appropriate to their needs. [119, 120] 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 [113]. If they do seek help, they may be more likely to turn to peers, rather than to formal sources. It is important therefore to build skills for peer support and peer referral, as well as to normalise help-seeking as a legitimate action.

To promote help-seeking, it is important that education approaches develop understanding of how to access the different kinds of formal help sources (such as counsellors, doctors and psychologists) as well as informal help sources (such as friends and family). Young people benefit from knowing about available services and whether they are free, confidential and responsive to those of diverse cultural backgrounds or identities.

Learning intentions

- Students will identify different sources of help, support or advice available in the school and wider community.
- Students will consider the pros and cons of using a range of informal and formal sources of help for social and emotional problems.
- Students will reflect on their personal and relationship skills relating to social and emotional learning and gender literacy.
- Students will identify actions that arise from their reflections.

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 to the strengths exercises in Activity 1: Emotional landscape in the senior high school years), 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.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Help-seeking sources' scenarios
- 'Help-sources' tool (source from Topic 5, Activity 1)
- 'Self-assessment: Reflection on my personal and social capabilities' checklist (copies to hand out)

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Provide students with content advice. Remind students that in this lesson they will focus on the different kinds of help sources that people can use when confronted with a range of life challenges, including challenges associated with stress, mental health problems, emotional distress, sexual assault and family violence.

   Remind students about the importance of providing a supportive space for each other while the class considers these challenges.

2. Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4 people. Provide students with access to the 'Help-sources' tool and the help-seeking sources scenario handout. Explain that they will prepare to take part in a chat show game which has an advisory panel who represent different help sources. Each group will provide a delegate to sit on the panel and play the role of their allocated character.

Allocate each group to represent one of the following characters:

- a friend
- a parent or carer
- a teacher
- a school wellbeing leader
- a psychologist
- a GP
- a school nurse
- a helpline operator (x3) (for example, assign one group to represent Kids Helpline and Lifeline, another to speak for Headspace and Beyond Blue and another for 1800RESPECT)

3. Provide groups with access to the 'Help-sources' tool. Ask them to become familiar with the information about their assigned help source. They should then select a representative to sit on the panel for the chat show to speak on behalf of their allocated help source. They will seek to outline the strengths and limitations of the kind of help they can provide in relation to the scenarios. These scenarios will be provided in advance and then read out by the chat show host during the chat show. The group should work with their representative to brainstorm ideas for the way their help source could provide support for the problems described in the scenarios.
4. After allowing time to prepare, invite each group to send their representative forward to join the panel to be interviewed by the host. Use a volunteer from the class to play the host (alternatively the teacher can play this role). The host will read the scenario aloud and interview the different help-source representatives in turn, using the following questions:
   - Why should this person seek help?
   - What kind of support or advice might your help source be able to offer?
   - What fears or apprehensions might a person have about using your help source?
   - What might be some of your strengths and limitations as a help source in a situation like this?
   - Is there any message of support your help source would likely want to share with the help seeker?

Coaching point:
Disagreeing in an agreeable way. Encourage students to practise their skills in disagreeing in an agreeable way. Discussion surrounding matters of difference, discrimination and how to achieve equity can result in widely diverse views. Encourage students to explain their own point of view and to summarise how it is similar to or different from other viewpoints. Explain that in a respectful forum, people challenge each other's ideas without insulting the person who holds ideas that are different from their own.

5. Explain that as activities within this unit have been designed to help students to develop their personal and relationship skills, it is useful at this stage to reflect on the importance of these skills, the ways they use them and the ways they might seek to continue to evolve their personal and social capabilities.
6. Ask students to review the 'Self-assessment personal and social capabilities' checklist and make some notes about what they have been doing that has helped foster these capabilities.
7. Following the reflection, ask them to find 3 items on the checklist that they think are particularly valuable in relationships. Invite students to share the items they chose, suggesting why each is a particularly important skill and giving some examples of situations where they believe it to be particularly useful.
8. Remind students that if the session raised any concerns for them, it can be helpful to talk with someone. Remind them of the help sources available in the school and refer them to key help sources in the community. Highlight the 'Help-sources' tool that alerts people to a range of help sources and provide additional details about those services which are available in the school.
9. Once this lesson has concluded, check in with students who have modified their participation or used an exit slip to ensure they have access to support if required.

Review

Invite students to reflect on the various learning activities they have engaged with as part of this unit of work, and to name some of the ways these activities have contributed to developing or valuing the skills listed on the checklist.



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.

Help-seeking sources scenarios

Scenario 1

Mali is worried about her friend Gemma who went through a messy relationship break-up and hasn't seemed to get over it. Gemma seems really down and she's been falling behind in all her subjects, even though she has usually been a strong achiever.

Scenario 2

Oscar is feeling increasingly worried about his end of year exams. He can't sleep and when he thinks about them his heart starts racing and he feels nauseous. His parents really want him to do well, and he doesn't want to disappoint them, but he can't see himself getting the marks for the course they want him to get into.

Scenario 3

Jacinta was assaulted at a party by a student from her school who had been drinking heavily. She doesn't want to see them again, but they go to the same school and they will cross paths. Jacinta's anxiety about running into the person is affecting her capacity to concentrate and she gets anxious about moving around the school without at least one close friend with her. Initially she was worried about the fact that she had been drinking at the party, so she hasn't told her parents about what happened, plus she feels it would be hard to cope with her parents' distress on her behalf.

Scenario 4

Mik is worried about their friend Jade who has started hanging out with a group of people who do drugs and no longer attend school. Mik is worried that Jade might end up getting into trouble and dropping out as well, even though Jade had planned to attend a TAFE course when she finishes school.

Questions for the chat show host:

- Why should this person seek help?
- What kind of support or advice do you think your help source might be able to offer?
- What fears or apprehensions do you think a person might have about using your help source?
- What do you think might be some of your strengths and limitations as a help source in a situation like this?
- Is there any message of support you want to share with the help seeker?

Self-assessment: Reflection on my personal and social capabilities checklist

You might use this tool to reflect on when and how you use these capabilities in your relationships, and on the ways you want to continue to further develop them.

This tool can also be used to give feedback on the kinds of learning activities that have helped you to advance your personal and social capabilities.

Demonstrating active listening

I can tune in to other people. I take in what they are saying and what their mood is. I check back with them to see if I understand what they are trying to say to me. I can notice when they need to talk and how to listen in a supportive way.

Understanding my emotions and managing how I express them

I notice and understand my feelings, but I don't let them rule my behaviour. I notice when I get angry, down, anxious or jealous and what triggers this. I can manage these emotions in myself without becoming abusive or disrespectful and without harming myself. I can let myself be proud and enthusiastic. I can work out how to express these feelings differently depending on the situation and how the way I do this might affect others.

Understanding the experiences and perspective of others (empathy)

I can tune in to how others are feeling. I can imagine what it might be like for them, even if they are not showing it or telling me about it. I think about how what I do affects others. I show respect for people even if they want or like different things from me or hold different beliefs or views.

Recognising my own and others' strengths

I can tune in to the positives and appreciate what people can do, not just what they can't do. I can also recognise some of my own personal and cultural strengths and value what they help me to do.

Responding assertively and respectfully

I talk straight with people. I find a respectful way to say how it is for me. I tell them what I think is okay and not okay for me. I don't have to hide my feelings. I can tell people what is right for me in a respectful way and let them know about my needs, preferences and beliefs. I can appreciate other people's needs and rights and work out ways to respect the rights of both parties when there is a disagreement. I know how to work things out in an assertive way without getting abusive, violent or disrespectful.

Problem-solving

I can think things through before I make a choice, looking at different possible options and weighing up the positives and negatives. I don't make big decisions on the spur of the moment or when I am upset. I make sure to calm myself down and take time to select actions that are right for me. I don't let others push me into things.

Combating negative self-talk and using positive self-talk

When I get anxious, I can talk myself through it and can challenge my fears with some logic or some encouragement to have a go. I understand the value of challenging negative thoughts and I can apply positive self-talk by reminding myself of my strengths and past achievements.

Using effective coping strategies

When things are challenging, I have a range of positive strategies I can use to calm my anxiety, cool down my anger, cheer myself up, seek support from others, get organised, stay on task, let off some steam, get some time out or distract my attention.

Help-seeking

I can work out when to handle things by myself and when it's better to involve friends, family, useful adults or services. I can work forward despite challenges like embarrassment, guilt, shame and anxiety when I need to seek out help from others. I can empathise with others regarding barriers to help-seeking and can assist peers to overcome these barriers in times of need.

Accessing peer support

I can talk to friends when they are in a bad way. I can encourage them to help-seek when the situation calls for it and I know how to work with them to find a useful source of help. I can also help-seek for a friend in an emergency, or high-risk situation, even if they won't admit to how serious the situation is. I understand that one form of peer support can be letting someone know when they have crossed the line about what constitutes respectful behaviour and that abusing someone is not okay, regardless of feelings like anger, hurt or rejection.

Behaving respectfully in sexual and romantic relationships

I understand the different sorts of gender pressures that can be placed on people because of social expectations and attitudes. I can identify when these pressures do harm or work to limit choices or lead to unfair or discriminatory treatment. I understand that some gender norms affect the way people behave in sexual relationships. I can work out when power is unequal or when rights aren't being respected. I understand that many forms of media do not model respectful or healthy sexual encounters and that healthy relationships require reciprocal respect, trust, care, communication, consent and mutual understanding. I can recognise signs of coercive control. I know I can be supported to speak up, say it like it is, make changes, seek help or get out of an abusive relationship. I also know that it might not be safe for someone to say 'no' or to leave when in a situation involving violence, discrimination, dependence or abuse. In this situation, it is important to find a safe enough way to tell someone who can help.

Understanding affirmative consent

I understand and accept the importance of verbal affirmative consent before people start sexual activity and in continuing any sexual activity. I am aware that consent must be affirmative, mutual, informed, ongoing, certain, clear and actively checked, communicated and understood. I know it can only be given by people in a fit state, and that children under the age of 12 cannot give consent to sexual activity. I am aware of the laws about the age of consent which state that people between the ages of 12 and 16 can consent with those who are within 24 months of their age but not to older people. They cannot consent to having sex with someone over 18, or to having sex with a person in a position of authority or power over them – for example, a tutor, relative, teacher or coach.

Understanding my rights to be safe from violence

I know when someone wants to do something that is not okay by me. I know I have the right to say 'no' when others want to involve me in actions that I don't want to do that make me feel vulnerable or used or pushed around or that I don't believe are right. I know I have the right to have my boundaries respected in situations involving personal relationships, including relationships that involve sexual activity, whether person-to-person or online. I understand that if I do not feel safe enough to assert my rights, this may be because I am encountering forms of discrimination, violence, coercion, dependence or inequality which are not my fault. I understand that if it is not safe to say no, or to go, then I am not the one to blame. I have the right to be safe from violence. I understand it can be a challenging process for someone in this situation to find a safe enough way to tell someone who can help. I know there are many sources of help for people in this situation, and that help-seeking is an act of courage and respect for my own rights to fair and respectful treatment.

Understanding people's rights to respect, safety and inclusion

I can respect people's human rights to respect, dignity, equality and freedom from violence. I can speak up to show that I do not endorse abuse, and understand that when people ignore, join in or laugh along with abusive behaviour that this can be experienced as a harmful form of endorsement or encouragement.

Reflecting on everyday practise

- How do you model help-seeking behaviour to your students?
- How do you respond to help-seeking behaviour from your students?
- How do you work out when to initiate a helping conversation with your students?
- How familiar are you with your school's wellbeing support services?

Talking further

Encourage students to talk with people at home about help sources that family members could call on if a problem affects someone's mental, physical or financial health or safety.

Optional game

The Blindfold Game works well to raise topic-related themes like trust. See the Games Collection at pages 144 to 147 for instructions.

Games Collection: Strengthening social support through collaborative games

To make best use of these games, use them to:

- build connectedness and social support
- help students to mix and enjoy working with all the different people in their class
- link to the themes of the lesson. To do this, after the game, ask some questions related to the issue you are focusing on. For example, 'What messages can you see in this game that remind us about how to have respectful relationships with each other?

The Name Call Game

This game can be used to help people to learn each other's names in a playful way.

Method

1. Go around the circle and ask everyone to say their name.
2. On second rotation ask each person to say their name and add an adjective that starts with the same letter for example, Happy Helen, Lovely Linh.
3. As each person says their name and accompanying adjective (for example, Happy Helen) the rest of the group echoes the name in one voice.
4. Explain that learning and using names is to get to know each other.

The Name Toss Game

This game might be used after the Name Call Game has been used in previous sessions. It can be used to invite people to collaboratively assist each other to remember all the names.

Method

1. The teacher holds the soft toy and says their own name first, then the name of the person they are throwing the toy to (person 2).
2. Person 2 then says their own name, and the name of the person they are throwing the toy to (person 3). The group members are to use this pattern (their name first, then the name of the person they throw to) to keep the toy moving around the group. Encourage the group to make sure everyone has had a turn before repeating any names.
3. Explain that the short game is to help everyone remember names and to make sure that everyone is included by having their name called.

The Three Things I Know About You Game

This game can be used to help people get to know each other.

Method

1. Pair students with someone they are sitting next to. Ask them to spend one minute to find out 3 things that are similar about them and three things that are different.
2. Ask each pair to say one similarity and one difference.
3. Stop the game and ask the group to point out some key messages in the game that are useful for us as we work to create respectful relationships and good friendships within and across genders.
4. Point out that we have much in common and also we are different. This is something to be enjoyed.

The Anyone Who Game

This game can be used to help people mix, energise and get to know each other.

Method

1. Seat students on chairs arranged in a circle.
2. 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 ice cream').
3. When they call out the category, all players of that category must move to a different chair (that is, all those who 'like ice cream' must leave their chairs and find a different chair). At this time the teacher will rush to a chair and the last person left without a chair will make the next call in the game.
4. The next person will then make a new call. For example, they might say 'Anyone who comes to school by bus'. Then all those in this category must swap to new seats.
5. Play a few rounds of the game. By this time students will be sitting in a mixed arrangement and some differences and similarities will have been noted.
6. Point out that in life we are all a bit different. We have our own likes and dislikes. However, we are all human, therefore we can all come to harm if we make bad choices and we can all benefit from being encouraged by family and friends to make healthy choices.
7. Ask the group to point out some key messages in the game that are useful for us as we work to create respectful relationships and good friendships within and across genders.

The Winking Game

This game can be used to help people mix and to energise the group.

It can be used to draw out key messages, like the importance of noticing and responding to others as a key skill for friendship and peer support. Sending clear messages is also a basic building block in our help-seeking endeavours.

Method

1. Explain that the purpose of the game is to try out many seats in the circle.
2. The way you get to try out a new seat is to silently wink at a person across the circle. If they make eye contact with you and wink or nod back, then you swap seats.
3. Aim to get as many seat swaps as you can.
4. Remember to look for who might be winking at you.
5. Stop the game once most students have had an opportunity to swap seats.

The Knots Game

This game can be used for team building and to discuss collaborative approaches to problem-solving. It includes high levels of body contact. For those who prefer not to play a body contact game, or for those whose bodies do not permit them to play this game, invite them to adopt other roles like 'reporter', 'coach', 'cheer squad', or 'occupational health and safety adviser'.

Method

1. Ask all students to form groups of about 8. Each group is to stand in a circle and join hands with other students across the circle so that they form a giant human knot.
2. Once the 'knot' is complete, the group must find a way of undoing themselves without letting go of each other.
3. Play the game again but this time without speaking.
4. Ask students, 'what sort of behaviours helped the group to solve the problem?'

The Mirror Game

This game can be used to talk about how to tune in and respond to the needs and ideas of others in a respectful way.

Method

1. Organise students into pairs and ask the shorter person to be A and the taller to be B.
2. Explain that in this game, the aim is to work with your partner to create a perfect mirror reflection. In the first round, A will be the leader and B will play the mirror. With pairs facing each other, A will begin to move and B will start to copy every action like a reflection.
3. Once they have had a chance to play, ask the partners to swap roles so that B becomes the leader and A becomes the mirror.
4. Ask students, 'what did you need to do to play that game successfully? What messages did that game have that relate to relationships?'

The Chopsticks Game

This game can be used to talk about collaborative problem-solving and the importance of everyone playing their part in social change efforts.

Equipment

- Chopsticks or pens (make sure they are not too pointy!)
- Music to play during the game (optional)

Method

1. Clear furniture from the space so students have room to move.
2. Organise students into pairs.
3. Explain that the first challenge in this game is for each pair to work together to keep a chopstick held between them. Each person in the pair should have their index finger in contact with one of the two tips of the chopstick, so the chopstick is horizontal to the ground. Each pair will need to find the right tension to maintain their hold on the object.
4. However, while they work at maintaining the right tension and holding the chopstick, pairs must also begin to move around the room, experimenting with turns and moving up and down, etc. without dropping the chopstick between them (demonstrate with a volunteer).
5. Distribute chopsticks to each pair and allow them to practise.
6. Once partners have had a chance to practise and begin to master this challenge, add in other chopsticks to link pairs together with other pairs, until you have the whole group in a single chopstick line moving around the room. It is more fun if you play music during this game.
7. Ask students what messages they can see in this game that are also relevant when we are thinking about what makes for effective peer support in the context of the senior years of high school.

Key messages

Use this game to highlight the importance of collaboration and cooperative teamwork as part of peer support. Our network is an important part of our life and influences our wellbeing and productivity.

The Hunter and Prey Game

This game can be used to talk about the ways gender stereotypes influence dating relationships and the importance of informed consent in relationships.

Method

1. Participants stand in a circle. The circle forms the boundary for the game.
2. Two people play at a time. One is the hunter. This person wears a blindfold. One is the prey. This person does not wear a blindfold.
3. The hunter tries to capture the prey. The hunter may call out as often as they like, 'Where are you?' The prey must answer straight away, saying, 'Here I am!' The hunter will use the sound to try and capture the prey. The people forming the circle must make sure the hunter and the prey stay in the circle.
4. If the hunter has not caught the prey in one minute, a new hunter and prey enter the game to play in their place.
5. If the hunter catches the prey within one minute, they stay in the circle and a new prey is sent in. Play a few rounds of the game.
6. Then reverse the game by blindfolding the prey. The hunter now is only permitted to travel by hopping. Nonetheless they will quickly catch their prey.
7. Play another round and show what would happen if the observers forming the ring around the players cooperated with the blindfolded prey to ensure they did not get caught.
8. Discuss what they see as the key messages in the game in relation to gender and relationships.
9. Point out that in the real world, people may be chasing partners. However, if they are to create a respectful relationship, they need to take the metaphorical blindfold off to eliminate any sense of power over the other, communicate respectfully with each other and engage in authentic and affirmative consent conversations.

The Robot and Controller Game

This game can be used to talk about the effect of abuse of power over others within relationships.

Method

1. Organise students into pairs. One will be the robot and one the controller.
2. The controller stands opposite the robot and raises their hand with palm facing the robot's face. The robot must keep their face the same distance from the controller's hand at all times. The controller will signal through hand movement where they want the robot to move as they take the robot for a walk around the room. This should be done without speaking. The controller may move the robot forward or backwards, up or down, as they progress around the room. Play for one minute.
    - Signal it is time to swap roles.
    - Repeat the game for one minute.
    - Stop the game and ask the questions:
    - Where in real-life situations do people have the experiences that were sampled in the game?
    - What effects can this have on the person in power?
    - What effects can this have on the person who must please the one in power?
    - What lessons can we learn from this game about how to assert our own needs and consider those of others?

The Blindfold Walking Game

This game can be used to talk about trust and informed consent within relationships.

Equipment

- One blindfold for each pair or ask students to shut their eyes when in role as the blindfolded person

Method

1. Organise students into pairs and ask them to arrange who will be blindfolded first.
2. Explain that in this game the sighted person will be responsible for guiding the blindfolded person around the room. They must ensure that their blindfolded partner does not crash into any furniture or any other students. Their aim is to keep their partner safe. To play at the advanced level, the sighted person is not allowed to make any physical contact with their blindfolded partner. They must guide them using their words only. To play at the basic level, the sighted person leads the blindfolded partner by their elbow. Ask pairs to choose at what level they will play the game.
3. Have any of those who do not wish to play arrange themselves as the obstacles in the space that the blindfolded people must navigate from one end of the room to the other with the help of their partners. (If everyone is playing, arrange some chairs and tables as obstacles to move around.)
4. Once students have had a go, ask partners to swap roles, choose their level of play (advanced or basic) and play again.
5. Ask students, 'where in real-life situations do people have the experiences that were sampled in this game?'

Relevant Statistics on Gender-Based Violence

Data Card 1

How common is it for people to experience violence from a current or previous partner?

- 1 in 5 (17%) women and 1 in 16 (6.1%) men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a previous or current partner since age 18

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data Card 2

How common is it for people to observe harassment of people of diverse sexualities or genders at school?

- 54% of surveyed 13–18-year-old Australian students report witnessing verbal harassment of gender and sexuality diverse students at school

Source: Ullman, J. (2021), Free to Be...Yet?: The second national study of Australian high school students who identify as gender and sexuality diverse. Centre for Educational Research, School of Education, Western Sydney University, Penrith.

Data Card 3

How common is it for people to report experiencing emotional abuse by a current or past partner?

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 20 (4.7%) men report experiencing emotional abuse by a current or past partner since the age of 15

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data Card 4

How common is it for people to experience both financial abuse and emotional abuse by a past partner?

- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 3 men who report experiencing emotional abuse by a past partner also report experiencing financial abuse

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data Card 5

How common is it for people who had been physically assaulted to believe that alcohol or drugs had been involved in their most recent incident of physical assault?

- 50% of women and 61% of men persons aged 18 years and over who experienced physical assault believed that alcohol or any other substance contributed to their most recent incident.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Crime Victimisation, Australia, 2017-18

Data Card 6

How common is it for women to experience sexual violence?

- Very common, especially in more recent times. An Australian study of 57,000 women found that 51 per cent of women in who were in their twenties in 2019, 34 per cent of women in their forties at this time, and 26 per cent of women aged 68 to 73 at this time had experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

Source: Townsend, N., Loxton, D., Egan, N., Barnes, I., Byrnes, E., & Forder, P. (2022). *A life course approach to determining the prevalence and impact of sexual violence in Australia: Findings from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health*. ANROWS.

Relevant Statistics on Gender-Based Violence

Data Card 7

How common is it for women to experience sexual assault by someone they know?

- In the most recent incident of sexual assault by a male, women were most likely to experience sexual assault by a male they knew (87%).
- The location of the most recent incident was most likely to be in the woman's home (40%) or in the perpetrator's home (17%)
- Most women, almost 9 out of 10 (87%), did not contact the police

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data Card 8

How common is it for people to experience sexual harassment?

- 1 in 2 (53%) women and 1 in 4 men (25%) report being sexually harassed since the age of 15

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Data Card 9

Are younger or older people more likely to experience sexual harassment?

- For both men and women, younger age groups were more likely than older persons to experience sexual harassment. Approximately 38% of women and 16% of men aged 18-24 years had experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data Card 10

How common is it for people to experience stalking?

- 1 in 6 women (17%) and 1 in 15 men (6.5%) experienced an episode of stalking since the age of 15.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data Card 11

How common is it for people to experience physical or sexual abuse before the age of 15?

- 1 in 6 women (16%) and 1 in 10 men (11%) aged 18 years and over experienced abuse before the age of 15.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data Card 12

How common is it for people to experience image-based abuse?

- 1 in 3 people aged 16–19 (31%) were the victim of at least one form of image-based abuse (1).
- 12% of 10–19-year-olds report forwarding a sext without consent (2).

Source:

1. Henry, N., Powell, A. & Flynn, A. 2017. Not just 'revenge pornography': Australians' experiences of image-based abuse. A summary report. Melbourne: RMIT University in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.
2. Klettke, B., Hallford, D. J., & Mellor, D. J. (2014) Sexting prevalence and correlates: A systematic literature review. Clinical Psychology Review, 34(1), 44–53.

Relevant Statistics on Gender-Based Violence

Data Card 13

How common is it for people to experience being coerced to send a sext?

- 52.3% of girls and 23.3% of boys report at least one coercive motivation for sending a sext
- 33% of girls and 15% of boys said they gave in and sent a sext after repeatedly being asked

Source: Reed, L. A., Boyer, M. P., Meskunas, H., Tolman, R. M., & Ward, L. M. (2020). How do adolescents experience sexting in dating relationships? Motivations to sext and responses to sexting requests from dating partners. Children and Youth Services Review, 109, 104696.

Data Card 14

How common is it for people to be physically assaulted by someone they know?

- 66% of men reporting on the most recent experience of physical assault said they were assaulted by a male stranger in a place of recreation, leisure or outside
- Women are more likely to experience physical assault by someone known to them (92%) and most commonly in their own home (65%)

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017. Personal Safety Survey

Data Card 15

How common is it for people of diverse sexuality to experience workplace sexual harassment?

- 52% of those who identify as of diverse sexuality report experiencing workplace sexual harassment as compared to 31% of heterosexual identifying people.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.

Cross-referencing to Catching On

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 11-12								
	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: Strengths, challenges and study skills								
Activity 1: Emotional landscape in the senior high school years	●		●					
Activity 2: Setting personal goals and objectives	●		●					
Activity 3: Time management and procrastination	●		●					
TOPIC 2: Stress and coping								
Activity 1: Strategies for coping with stress and challenge	●							
Activity 2: Managing self-talk when under stress	●							
Activity 3: Coping in context	●							
Activity 4: Relaxation techniques	●							
TOPIC 3: Safer socialising								
Activity 1: Active listening for peer support	●	●	●					
Activity 2: Peer support for problem-solving	●		●					
Activity 3: Assertive talk	●	●	●					

Cross-referencing to Catching On

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 11-12								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help-seeking	Gendered violence
TOPIC 3: Safer socialising								
Activity 4: Explaining how you feel	●	●	●					
Activity 5: Social problem-solving: exploring possibilities for prevention or intervention	●	●	●		●	●	●	
TOPIC 4: Understanding gender, identity and respect								
Activity 1: Rights, respect and inclusion – how fair is our nation?	●	●	●	●				●
Activity 2: Exploring gender stereotypes	●	●	●	●		●		
Activity 3: Performing gender, policing gender	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Activity 4: Gender norms and their influence on consent conversations	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
TOPIC 5: Positive gender relationships								
Activity 1: Gender-based violence, consent and the law	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Activity 2: Pornography, gender and assumptions about intimate relationships	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Cross-referencing to Catching On

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Resources Level 11-12								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help-seeking	Gendered violence
TOPIC 6: Help-seeking and peer referral in response to gender-based violence								
Activity 1: Help-seeking, peer support and peer referral in response to gender-based violence	●		●		●	●	●	●
Activity 2: Alcohol, respect and positive peer intervention following violence	●		●			●	●	●
Activity 3: Know your help sources	●		●		●	●	●	●

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