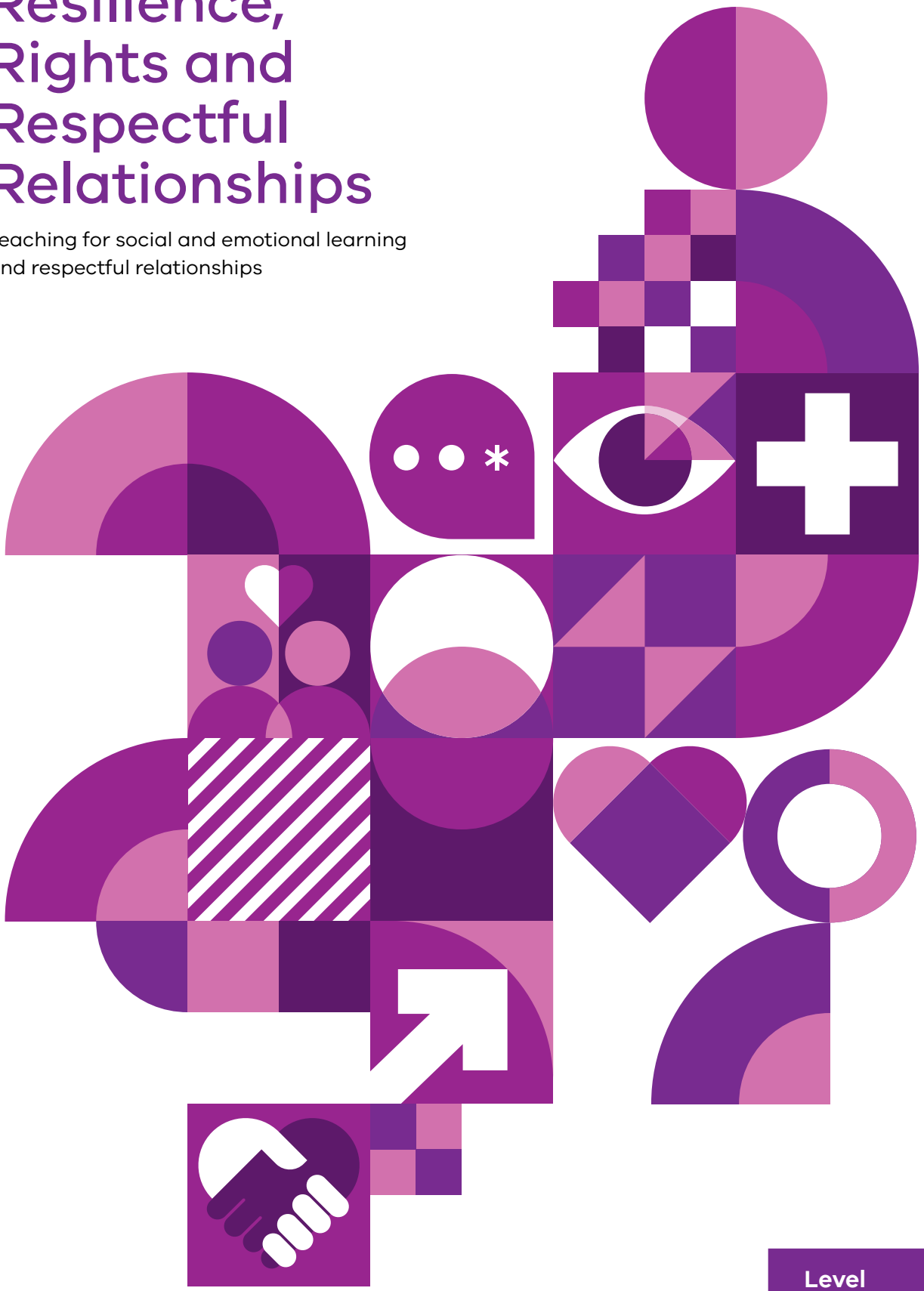
Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships

Teaching for social and emotional learning and respectful relationships



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Level 1-2 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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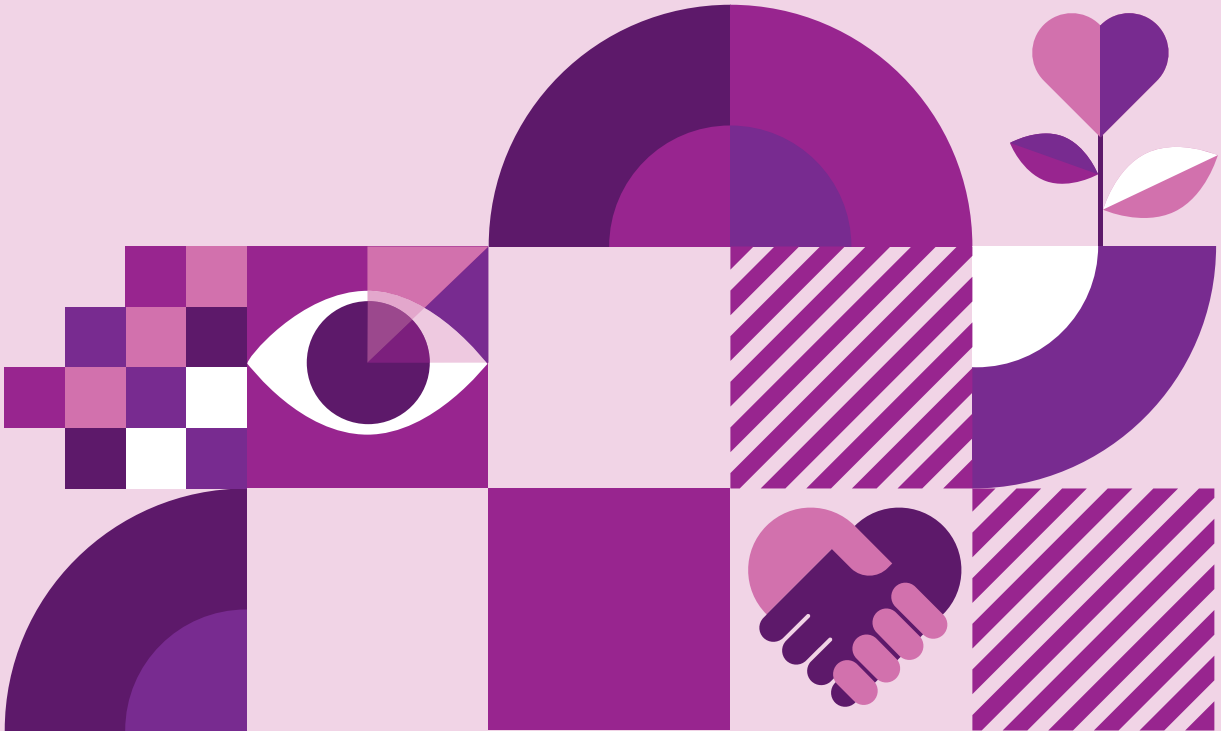

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Introduction Overview

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

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

Table 1: Topic areas in the RRRR Resource

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

Using a research-informed approach to wellbeing education

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

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

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

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

Advancing learning and wellbeing

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

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

Why provide social and emotional learning?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What is Respectful Relationships Education?

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

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

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

- About 56% of Year 4 students and 43% of Year 8 students were bullied monthly or weekly [30].
- On average, those Year 4 and Year 8 students who were bullied achieved lower scores in Trends in International Maths and Science Studies (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Studies (PIRLS) than children who were not. This indicates that there is a relationship between the average score achieved by children and the frequency of bullying [30].

54% of 13- to 18-year-old students reported witnessing verbal harassment of gender and sexuality diverse students at schoolf

- 22% of women and 6.1% of men have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 [32].
- 11% of women and 3.6% of men experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 [32].
- 1 in 4 women (23%) and 1 in 14 men (7.3%) have experienced violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15 [32].

What is consent education?

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

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

Key Points

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

Why include a focus on gender norms and stereotypes?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Positive effects of RRE

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

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

Key Points

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

Why commence RRE in primary school?

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

Why provide RRE across the secondary school years?

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

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

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

based violence as boys age into mid-adolescence.

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

Why use gender-inclusive approaches?

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

Teaching protective behaviours to support prevention of child abuse

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

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

The importance of a whole-school approach

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

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

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

Where does the RRRR resource fit within the school curriculum?

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

Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum integration table

The Victorian HPE curriculum [74]

The Health and Physical Education curriculum will support students to:

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

HPE focus areas

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

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

HPE strand: Personal, Social and Community Health

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

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

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

Personal and Social Capability [75]

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

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

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

Effective implementation

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

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

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

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

Key Points

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

Teacher professional preparedness and support

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

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

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

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

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

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

Setting up a safe social space

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

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

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

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

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

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

Teaching sensitive material

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

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

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

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

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

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

Key Points

It's important to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Supporting the Child Safe Standards

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

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

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

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

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

Teacher-initiated conversations following possible signs of distress

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

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

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

Key Points

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

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

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

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

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

Dealing with resistance and backlash

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

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

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

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

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

Understanding the ways resistance and backlash can present in schools

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

Resistance and backlash examples

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

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

Responding to student expressions of hate speech

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

Key Points

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parents and carers as partners

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

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

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

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

Level 1-2 Resource

Introductory activities

Aims

Activities will assist students to learn simple rules and agreements they need to support a safe and friendly learning environment in their class.

Informed by the evidence base

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

Equipment

- Room to move

Activity 1: The Stop and Listen Game

Method

1. Sit students in a circle on the mat.
2. Explain that in class you will use signs or actions to show that you want everyone to stop what they are doing and listen to you. Demonstrate the clapping technique, where you clap and students repeat the sound by clapping the same rhythm as you. Start with a single clap and ask students to copy the movement. Next, use a double clap and ask students to copy the movement.
3. Practise this a few times. Let them know that this is one way you will signal that it is time for everyone to give their attention to you.
4. Challenge students to see if they can manage this while they are moving around. Ask students to walk slowly around the space without touching each other and without bumping into each other. When you clap, they stop and repeat the clapping pattern you provide.

Coaching point:
Gamification. Using a playful or game-based format through which to practise skills can help to develop students' sense of pride and efficacy in their capacity to respond. Use your preferred 'Attention, please' rituals, like simple clap signals or a hands-up signal.

Activity 2: A name game

Method

1. Ask students to sit in a circle. Explain that they will play a game where they practise each other's names. Go around the circle and ask everyone to say their name, 'I am [name].' When each person says their name, everyone will respond by saying the name together with a greeting, 'Hello, [name].' Demonstrate this with the class, using your own name first. If some students find it difficult to introduce themselves, you might assist by saying: 'This is [name].'
2. Reinforce the importance of using friendly ways to greet each other, like saying hello and using someone's name.
3. The following are optional extras to assist with learning names and practising welcoming routines:
   - Use a soft toy to pass around the circle. Students will say their name when they receive the toy. Everyone repeats this name together with a welcoming phrase like 'Good morning, [name]' or 'Hello, [name].' The person with the toy will then pass it to someone else in the class.
   - Add a simple physical activity to the naming ritual – for example, students stand in the circle and lift their arms high as they say their name. Then everyone echoes their name while also raising their arms high as if in a big cheer.

Coaching point
Welcoming routines. Simple and joyful welcoming routines can help students to feel connected to the class. Students benefit from feeling that not only their teacher but also their peers are pleased to see them.

Activity 3: A getting-to-know-you game

Method

1. Explain, 'We will play a talking game to help use get to know someone a little bit better. In this game we might find some ways we are the same, and some ways we are different.'
2. Explain that students will work in pairs. They will talk to each other to find out a food that their partner likes. When they have done that, they will ask about a game they like to play. Provide a visual reminder of the 2 tasks, like pictures of a food and a game.
3. Demonstrate the task with a volunteer. Coach the volunteer to ask you about a food you like. Offer an answer, then ask them about a food they like. Repeat the process by coaching them to ask you about a game you like to play. Offer an answer, then ask them about a game they like.
4. Pair students around the circle and invite them to exchange this information.
5. Ask a person in each pair to report back the name of their partner, and one thing they learnt about either a game or a food that their partner likes.
6. Ask who found they shared some similar likes to those of their partner. Ask for hands up to show who found some differences. Point out that we are the same in some ways, and we are also different. Difference is a good thing and can make life fun.

Activity 4: We help to keep our bodies safe

Method

1. Sit students in a circle. Explain that there are lots of things we can do to help everyone to feel safe in the classroom. Provide an example of an action (for example, saying hello). Invite students to add some suggestions. Acknowledge and reinforce their contributions and invite or provide examples of how the suggestion might work as an action.
2. Explain:

   Because there are a lot of people in the one room, we need ways to make sure that we help to keep our bodies safe. To help us think about that, we are going to play a game. Imagine we are all sitting inside a bubble. Our own bubble is the little bit of space all around each of us. We are going to practise walking around, very carefully, so we don't bump into anyone and burst their bubble.
3. Arrange for students to practise this. Ask students to stand up and walk slowly making sure they protect their bubble and other students' bubbles by looking carefully to avoid bumping. Consider asking for students to start in slow motion if they are finding this challenging.
4. Once students are seated again, ask them what they did to make sure they did not burst anyone's bubble. Provide positive feedback on the actions they took, like looking around, noticing other people, being careful about what they did with their own body, and not moving so fast that they could not manage this.
5. Reinforce the idea that each student's bubble can be a safe space for their body. Ask, 'How we can we make sure we look after our own or someone else's bubble when we are sitting on the mat, at tables and in the playground?' Examples of responses include sitting still, keeping our hands to ourselves, taking turns on the play equipment, waiting in line and taking turns to move through the doorway.

Coaching point

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

Activity 5: We help to make a safe and happy class

Method

1. Sit students in a circle. Explain that there are lots of things we can do to help everyone to feel happy in the classroom and help them to work well. Provide an example of an action you have seen students take (for example, 'I saw you taking turns with the paints today, and I heard you inviting someone to join in.')
2. Encourage students to name some actions that people can take to help make others feel happy to be in the class. Provide positive feedback on their contributions and invite or provide examples of how the suggestion might work as an action (for example, being kind, encouraging others to join in, or taking turns).
3. Ask students to name some actions that help people to try their best and to learn well in class (for example, 'You stop talking and listen when I ask.') Encourage students to name some actions that students can take to help the class learn well together (for example, waiting your turn or putting your hand up and asking for help when you are not sure about something.)
4. Aim to positively frame suggestions made in the negative, for example, 'not being mean' could look and sound like 'being kind', 'taking turns' or 'sharing'.
5. Sum up the activity by naming a small set of positive actions that everyone can take to make a safe and happy class. Aim to keep the list short and positive, for example:
   - We listen.
   - We are kind.
   - we try hard
   - we take turns
   - we help each other
   - we encourage people to join in
   - we check in by asking, 'Can you please explain that again', 'Are you okay?' 'Can I help?' or 'May I borrow this please?'
   - we let the teacher know if we are not feeling okay.
6. Seek agreement from the class to do their best to use these actions.
7. Following the class, create a display or visual reminder of the key actions. Reinforce these expectations regularly, both in the positive mode of 'catching their success', by providing positive feedback when you observe students undertaking an action, and by revisiting expectations in the form of 'rule reminders' prior to engaging in activity that might call for particular effort to work towards these expectations.

Coaching point

Revisiting class agreements before teaching sensitive topics. It will be important to reconnect with class agreements and norms prior to delivery of more sensitive topics across the year. For more 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.

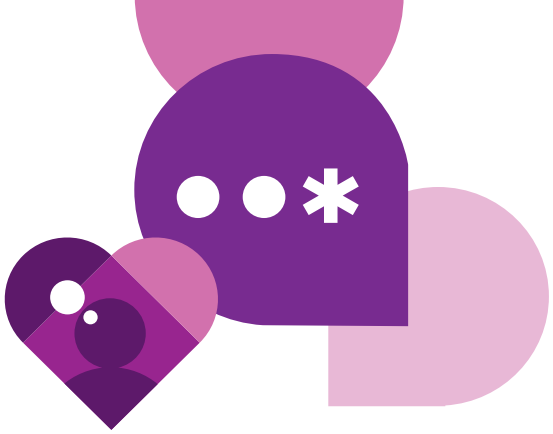
Review

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

Examples of simple, positive agreements

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

Topic 01 Emotional literacy



Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- recognise and identify their own emotions
- describe situations that may evoke these emotions
- compare their emotional responses with those of their peers.

Informed by the evidence base

Research shows that students who participate in rigorously designed and well-taught Social and Emotional Learning programs (SELs) demonstrate improved mental and social health, have improved relationships with peers, are less likely to engage in risky and disruptive behaviour, and show improved academic outcomes and have improved capacity for help-seeking.[4-7] Participation in SELs also reduces rates of sexual harassment and homophobic bullying and lead to reduced rates of bullying of LGBTIQ+ students, students from marginalised ethnic and migrant backgrounds, and students with disability.[8-10] A metaanalysis of 82 research trials conducted in a range of national contexts found lasting positive effects of social and emotional learning programs when students were followed up between one to 3 years post intervention regardless of students' race, socio-economic background or school location.[7]

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

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

Coaching point

Checking in with students about their emotional states. Aim to set up some daily routines for checking in with students about how they are feeling. Consider starting each day with a regular and predictable welcoming ritual or process. For example, a regular 'How do you feel right now?' game or ritual for use at the start of the day might include strategies suggested below. Teach the strategies by modelling them to students.

- Ask students to use their bodies to create a statue that represents how they feel right now. Acknowledge that they may be feeling a mix of emotions.
- Ask students to put their hands up somewhere from high above their heads to down low beside their hips to show where they are on the range from happy (high) to sad (low), full of energy (high) to tired (low), calm (high) to worried or bothered (low), and ready to learn (high) to not quite ready to learn (low).
- Ask for hands to find out who thinks they need a calming activity, and who thinks they need something to help them be cheerful or energetic.

You may wish to follow the feedback with a short and fun song or game when you see evidence that there is a need for a cheerful start, or with a short mindfulness or calming song or game when you see the class would benefit from a settling phase.

Topic 01

Activity 1: 'Emotions' statues

Learning intentions

- Students will name some emotions that students can experience at school.
- Students will show how emotions can be seen in body language.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Music (optional)
- Pictures of faces with different emotional expressions

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.

Method

1. Announce that the class will play a game that will help them to talk about different emotions. Ask students to stand and gather where there is space to move. Ask them to walk around the room and freeze when you give a signal. Then ask them to make themselves into a 'sad' statue. Model how they might do this. They will hold this pose for the count of 5. Then they will relax.
2. Ask half of the class to relax and the others to re-create their 'sad' statue. Ask the observers what the statues' bodies look like. Reverse roles and repeat, so all students have an opportunity to observe the 'sad' statues.
3. Ask all students to go back into being a 'sad' statue and to think of what sorts of things sometimes make people feel sad. Unfreeze the statues and ask students to sit while they share their ideas about what can make people sad.
4. Repeat this process with different emotions:
   - excited
   - angry
   - proud
   - scared
   - happy.
5. Show some images of faces with different emotional expressions. Ask the class to work together to guess which emotions these people may be experiencing. Encourage them to share ideas about what might cause someone to feel this way.
6. Ask them what they can do to try to work out what their friends' emotions might be or how their family members might be feeling. For example, they might:
   - look at the person's body to see what movements or shapes the body is in
   - look at their face to see if the person is smiling, frowning or crying
   - listen to what they are saying or how they are speaking, for example, shouting or sobbing
   - ask the person how they are feeling.
7. Point out that the skills of noticing how other people feel and asking them about how they feel are important in friendship.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask how the activity helped them to show some different things they know about emotions. Ask how the activity helped them to read or look at other people's body language to think about how they might be feeling.

Coaching point

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

Use teachable moments to make regular use of language for emotions, and to show the ways people can empathise with others (for example, 'I'm guessing from that frown that you are feeling a bit frustrated', 'That big smile tells me that you might be excited about trying this' or 'The sound of that big sigh has me guessing you're really disappointed.') Provide visual cues to help students understand and remember the words for emotions. Display the images for reference, along with the matching word for the emotion. Visual cues can be particularly useful to support the engagement of diverse learners. As part of your use of interactive read-aloud strategies, continue to build emotional literacy when reading class texts or engaging with other visual material by asking students to guess and name emotions that characters might be experiencing. For guidance on using this strategy, refer the Department of Education **Literacy Teaching Toolkit** https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/speakinglistening/Pages/examplereadalouds.aspx.

Topic 01

Activity 2: Emotion triggers

Learning intentions

- Students will draw a picture which shows a situation that might cause them to feel a particular emotion.
- Students will share their pictures with classmates to help them understand how people might feel in certain situations.

Equipment

- Paper and drawing materials

Method

1. Ask students to think back to how they showed what emotions can look like when they played the 'emotions' statue game. Remind them that they showed emotions like excited, angry, proud, scared and happy.
2. Ask them to think about some experiences that can cause each emotion. Invite suggestions on what might lead to people feeling these emotions.
3. Provide time for students to choose an emotion and draw a picture of themselves in a situation that might lead to them feel that way.
4. Encourage students to write an explanatory sentence on their picture, for example, 'I felt excited when it was my birthday', 'I felt angry when my sibling took my ball', or 'I felt sad when no one played with me in the playground.' Offer support to students who need assistance to formulate their title or explanation.
5. Arrange for the class to share their pictures in circle time. Ask those who felt they learnt more about each other from the activity to put their hands up. Remind them that learning about how others can feel is a good friendship skill.
6. Ask those who felt they learnt more about emotions from the activity to put their hand up. Tell them that learning about emotions is an important life skill.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask what they did to show how a certain situation might lead to them feeling a particular emotion.

Coaching point

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

Topic 01

Activity 3: Acts of friendship

Learning intentions

- Students will identify emotions that others may be feeling.
- Students will make suggestions about how people might feel when others exclude them from play.
- Students will suggest ways to help classmates play well together.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Paper and drawing materials

Method

1. Tell the story of Kris, who had a bad time during playtime (or create your own scenario): 'Kris had a bad time during recess. Some children said to Kris, "We don't like you. You look funny. You can't play with us."'
2. Ask for volunteers to suggest how this might have made Kris feel. Write these 'emotions' words on the board. Look for the opportunity to include words like hurt, lonely, sad, angry, afraid, excluded.
3. Invite the class or some volunteers to make 'emotions' statues for each of these words. Point out that these different emotions might all be present at once.
4. Ask, 'What could other children nearby do to help Kris?' Recruit a volunteer to be Kris. Arrange for 2 or 3 others to be the children playing nearby. Ask for suggestions as to how these children who are nearby could help. Invite the volunteers to show how to do one of these suggested acts of kindness.
5. Invite a new volunteer to become the Kris character and new sets of volunteers to show how some of the other suggestions might work in action.
6. After the demonstrations ask, 'What feelings might Kris have when these children are friendly?' Write these emotions words on the board. Aim to build a collection of words like happy, relieved, reassured, included, proud and grateful.
7. Ask for some new volunteers to make statues to show these emotions.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask:

- 'How did the activity help us learn to recognise emotions in others?'
- 'How did it help us to think about what we could do to help someone who might be feeling left out?'

Encourage students to use these skills when in the playground.

Coaching point

A focus on empathy. This activity helps to build empathy as students consider how others may be affected by negative peer treatment. The activity also advances capabilities to use a rich language to describe and understand more intensely felt emotions.

You may like to connect this lesson and the next with materials or school policies relating to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respectful relationships. It may be timely to remind students of the importance of help-seeking. The lessons in Topic 4: Problem-solving, Topic 6: Help-seeking and Topic 8: Positive gender relations revisit and address in more detail ways students can deal with situations like the one described here.

Topic 01

Activity 4: Sharing stories about acts of kindness

Learning intentions

- Students will draw a picture that shows them being kind to a classmate or family member.
- Students will describe what it can feel like when you are kind to someone else.
- Students will describe what it can feel like when other people show kindness to them.

Equipment

- Paper and drawing materials

Coaching point

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

Method

1. Ask students to think about the different friendship acts they saw in the previous role-play. Invite them to close their eyes and remember a time when they were friendly to another child or to someone in their family. What were they doing? If they can't remember one, they can use their imagination to help them think of a friendship act that they would like to engage in very soon.
2. Ask them to open their eyes and share their memory (or intention) with a person next to them. Arrange for pairs to share some of these memories with the class.

Coaching point

Supporting student's contributions. Use active listening skills to reflect 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.

3. Once the sharing is done, ask students to choose a friendship act which they have offered at some time (or would like to offer) and to draw a picture of this. Assist students to make a caption or short story to go with their picture.
4. Invite students to share these pictures and stories in circle time.

Review

Review the learning intentions by inviting students to reflect on what they have learnt from listening to other students sharing acts of kindness. Ask students to give examples of how friendly and kind actions can make people feel.

Collect the pictures to display or assemble them into an 'Acts of friendship' book for the class.

Coaching point

Sharing positive examples. Students can develop awareness of their strengths through sharing examples of them initiating kind actions. This sharing can build a collective sense of pride and recognition of their capacity to show respect and care in friendships and families.

Topic 01

Activity 5: The Connections Game for a focus on friendly connections

Learning intentions

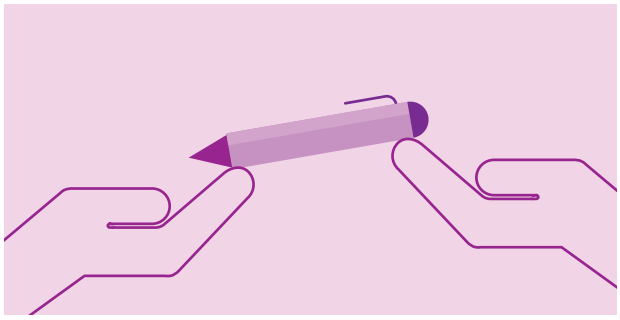
- Students will play a game that challenges them to use their cooperation and teamwork skills.
- Students will name some of the skills needed to work in a friendly way with a partner.
- Students will name some of the skills needed to play with others in a friendly way.

Equipment

- Room to move
- A set of pens with lids or chopsticks
- Music

Method

1. Explain that the game students are about to play will challenge their skills of partnership. They will work in pairs to balance a pen with lid or a chopstick between the first finger of the hands of the partners as they move around the room.



2. Place students in pairs and provide them with the equipment.
3. Ask for a volunteer to demonstrate the activity with you. Place the pen or chopstick between your index finger and your partner's index finger. Lead your partner in moving around the room, changing levels and negotiating obstacles. If you drop the pen, retrieve it and continue.
4. Using music, ask students to move around the room balancing their pen or chopstick.
5. Add additional challenge by providing 'connectors' between pairs to see if a group of 4 or even 8 students can travel together without dropping their items.
6. After the game, ask students to sit in a circle to answer the following questions:
   - 'How did you help each other to succeed in this game?' Responses could include, we watched each other, we communicated by asking to wait, or we went slower or faster.
   - 'What did you do to improve your skills during the game?' Responses could include, keep trying, start again, tell yourself you can do it, tell others they can do it, encourage and reassure each other.
   - 'When do you use these same skills in the playground? In the classroom?'
   - 'How do your families or carers help you to learn these skills? What do they encourage you to do?'
   - 'What are some of the ways that family members help each other at home?'

Review

Ask students to name some of the ways that playing this game has been good for the class. Invite them to name some of the skills they showed.

Reinforce that the skills of listening, noticing, cooperating, communication, and practising something over and over are needed both in the classroom and the playground. These teamwork skills help people to learn and to have fun. They help to make the classroom and playground a happy and safe place for everyone.

Coaching point:

Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can help students to mix and to strengthen social connectedness, which is a protective factor for mental wellbeing. Structured play can assist those who are anxious in social situations to participate with their peers. Games can also be used to advance social and emotional skills.[15] Following participation in a game, ask students to identify the skills they used that can also be used in other life situations. Encourage them to find key messages in the games about how to conduct respectful relationships. Games can also be helpful to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise the class, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- What patterns did you notice in the emotional expression and regulation of students across the last week?
- To what extent was there a pattern in the types of emotions you experienced over the course of the week?

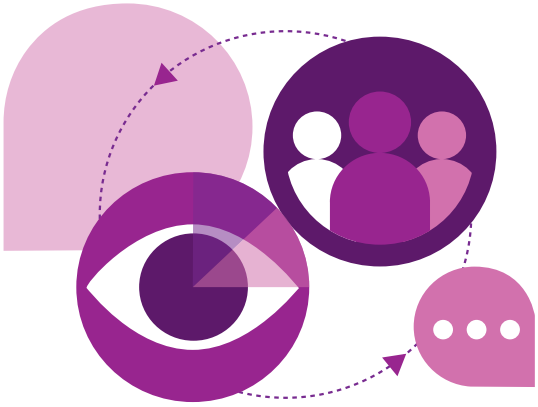
Extension activities

When reading stories to the class, ask them to identify the emotions that the key characters might be feeling, and to expand on this by describing the experiences that may be triggering these emotions. Aim to use a wide range of texts to provide good representation of the diversity of the school community, and to expose students to worlds they might not ordinarily encounter. Consider ways to strengthen appreciation of diversity through your text selection, by favouring texts that show characters from diverse families, cultures, religions, abilities, genders and countries, as well as texts written by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Talking further

Arrange for students to share the class-generated 'Acts of friendship' book with their families, or to take home one of their 'emotions' drawings.

Topic 02 Personal and cultural strengths



Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify and describe personal and cultural strengths
- explain how these strengths contribute to family and school life
- identify ways to care for others, including ways of making and keeping friends.

Informed by the evidence base

Social and emotional learning programs that use strengthsbased approaches promote student wellbeing, positive behaviour and academic achievement [16-19]. Research with neurodiverse adults found that the character strengths they most commonly acknowledged and valued in themselves included honesty, appreciation of beauty and excellence, love of learning, and fairness and kindness. Those who identified themselves as having the character strengths of gratitude, hope and honesty were more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction.[20] An intervention using a focus on character strengths with neurodiverse students in the early years of primary school led to improvement in executive functioning and friendship skills.[21] Research in the area of culturally inclusive pedagogy demonstrates the importance of approaches that are informed and enriched by the cultural heritages and strengths of the communities represented in the school [22, 23].

Children raised within collectivist cultures may have been provided with more opportunities to value interdependence, responsibility and cooperation, while those raised within individualistic cultures may have been encouraged to value personhood, rights, initiative and independence. Teachers should seek ways to recognise and embrace the strengths across both types of traditions. [24]Strategies to advance cultural inclusion include use of examples and case studies that illustrate the richness and contribution of various cultural heritages. This could include celebrating special days and festivals in the calendars of different religions and cultures that are represented in the school, as well as choosing stories that are set in different lands and cultures.

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 guidance on implementing **Child Safe Standard 1**: https://www.vic.gov.au/schools-culturally-safe-environments-guidance Establish a culturally safe environment where the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued, as well as the **Koorie cultural inclusion practice notes** https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/koorie-education/resources. Teachers can establish a safe cultural space with actions like:

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

Topic 02

Activity 1: The Traffic Lights Game for a focus on listening

Learning intentions

- Students will practise their listening skills.
- Students will identify the importance of listening as a key skill for learning.

Equipment

- Room to move

Method

1. Explain how to play the Traffic Lights Game. The call 'Green' means students should walk up and down on the spot. 'Red' means they must freeze and put their hand up in a 'stop signal'. 'Orange' means they should turn around on the spot. Practise the commands a few times. Then play the game faster.
2. Ask students to sit and think back on the game, 'What were the skills you used to follow the colour commands in this game?' Students may suggest skills like listening, paying attention, concentrating, remembering, controlling themselves and reacting quickly.
3. Highlight that being a good listener was important in this game. Ask, 'Can you think of some other times when the skill of listening is very important?'

Review

Conclude the activity by inviting students to review the learning intentions. Ask students how the game has helped them to practise their listening skills.

Coaching point

Encourage students to identify when they need to use their strengths to help them manage a challenging situation. Encourage students to name some of the strengths they can use to help them manage a challenging situation. Provide positive feedback on their capacity to choose a particular strength. Provide positive recognition when you see them display this strength in action. Consider use of visual displays to remind them of key strengths. It may be helpful to have some 'strengths' cards that students can choose to display on their desk when they have nominated it is time for them to call on a particular strength.

Topic 02

Activity 2: Strengths detectives

Learning intentions

- Students will describe some actions that make them feel proud.
- Students will identify some strengths they use at school.

Coaching point

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

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

Equipment

- Positive adjectives list

Method

1. Introduce the emotion 'feeling proud' and the sorts of experiences that lead students to feel proud of themselves. Ensure that acts of persistence, loyalty, kindness and caring are noted as well as experiences of being a 'winner'.
2. Tell students that you will share a very short story about someone who felt proud. They will have to guess what the person did that made them feel proud. Tell them, 'Keira's parent asked her what happened at school that day. Keira said she had done something that made her feel very proud. What do you think Keira might have done?'
3. Ask students to talk with a partner or in a small group to think up at least 5 different things that Keira might have done that led to her feeling proud. Ask some groups to think of actions that Keira might have taken in the playground, and others to think of actions she might have taken in the classroom.
4. Arrange for a report-back session. As students report back, build some adjectives to describe the types of actions taken, for example, kind, patient, persistent, brave, considerate, friendly and thoughtful. Refer to the 'positive adjectives' list below for inspiration.
5. Explain that these words describe some of the strengths that Keira showed in her actions.

Review

Conclude the activity by inviting students to review the learning intentions. Ask students to reflect on what they have learnt, inviting some volunteers to share their thoughts. To dig deeper, ask, 'How has this activity helped us to think about the kinds of things that can make people feel proud? How has the activity helped us to think about and learn about strengths we use at school?'

40 POSITIVE ADJECTIVES

for use when acknowledging strengths

Accepting	Hardworking	Fun-loving	Playful
Adaptable	Helpful	Generous	Sensible
Adventurous	Independent	Gentle	Supportive
Patient	Interested	Organised	Thoughtful
Loving	Loyal	Outgoing	Understanding
Attentive	Joyful	Outspoken	Honest
Brave	Kind	Polite	Encouraging
Calm	Neat	Careful	Energetic
Caring	Optimistic	Cheerful	Fair
Determined	Creative	Clever	Friendly

Topic 02

Activity 3: Building a ‘strengths’ display

Learning intentions

- Students will describe how to use strengths to be a good friend or family member

Equipment

- 12 ‘strengths’ cards
- Strings or other suitable material to assist in displaying students’ work

Method

1. Introduce students to the ‘strengths’ cards. Read each strength aloud and ask for examples of the way someone can show this strength in class, in the playground or at home. Explain that their task will be to show what one of the strengths looks like or sounds like in a small role-play. Use a trio of volunteers to demonstrate an example.
2. Arrange for students to work in pairs or trios, and allocate the ‘strengths’ cards, giving each group one of the locations (class, playground or home) as the setting in which to show their strength in action. Arrange for the groups to show their role-plays and have the class guess the strengths. After the guessing, invite the players to explain their choices.
3. Point out that each of the strengths shown helps to make the classroom, playground or home a happier place.
4. Ask students to a draw a picture of themselves using one of the strengths in their daily life, and to label it with their name, and the strength. Let students know you will build a display from the pictures.
5. Refer to items on the ‘strengths’ display to acknowledge positive behaviour in subsequent lessons, or to engage students in naming the positive behaviours they will need to draw on as they begin a collaborative task.

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking students to talk with a partner to summarise what they have learnt in the activity. Ask several pairs to share their thoughts with the class. Seek some examples of how the activity has helped them to understand that we all use many strengths in lots of different ways.

STRENGTH CARDS

Honest
You tell the truth even when it is not easy.

Fair
You let everyone play and you keep to the rules.

Funny
You make people laugh and feel happy.

Hardworking
You keep working even when it gets hard.

Forgiving
You accept it when someone else says sorry for doing the wrong thing.

Curious
You like to learn new things.

Friendly
You are nice to everyone and help them join in.

Brave
You try new things even when it is scary.

Kind
You help other people.

Patient
You are good at waiting for your turn.

Generous
You share with others.

Leadership
You help the group to do things.

Topic 02

Activity 4: Learning about respect from Aboriginal perspectives

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

Learning intentions

- Students will learn about respect from Aboriginal perspectives.
- Students will describe ways people can show respect for themselves, for people and for Country.

Equipment

- *Respect*, written by Aunty Fay Muir and Sue Lawson, and illustrated by Lisa Kennedy, or a thematically suitable alternative text created by Aboriginal author(s) and artist(s)
- *An important message from Mr Beaky*, written by Cassie Leatham and Sue Lawson, or a thematically suitable alternative text created by Aboriginal author(s) and artist(s)
- Drawing materials

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) discussion paper *Indigenous cultural competency in the Australian teaching workforce* (2020) found that many teachers were anxious about being culturally insensitive as a result of their lack of knowledge. [25] However, there are many resources available for teachers that guide the design of learning informed by Aboriginal perspectives. Stories by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and artists are among these resources, as are contributions by 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. They enable all Victorian teachers and students to engage respectfully and feel connected to this identity. Further advice is available from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), who have produced the **Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** https://www.vaeai.org.au/wp-content/uploads/delightful-downloads/2020/01/Protocols-for-Koorie-Education-in-Victorian-Primary-and-Secondary-Schools-2019.pdf This guidance includes an emphasis on the importance of all students learning about the natural sovereignty that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples held across Australia prior to invasion, colonisation and Federation, which they still hold, the major events that have affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities since colonisation, and the richness of the current living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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

Activity 4A: Respect

Method

1. Model recognition and respect by introducing the authors and illustrators of the book *Respect*.
2. Tell students that this book was written by Aboriginal author and Boonwurrung Elder Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir, along with her co-author Sue Lawson. It was illustrated by Lisa Kennedy, who is a descendant of the coastal Pairebeenne Trawlwoolway clan in north-east Tasmania. Boonwurrung Country is in Victoria. It includes the coast from the Werribee River down to Wilsons Promontory, including places called Westernport Bay, Mornington Peninsula, French Island and Phillip Island. Pairebeenne Trawlwoolway Country is in the coastal areas of north-east Tasmania.

Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir is a Boonwurrung Elder who cares about sharing her culture and stories with all children. The Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nation are also known as the Bunurong, Boon Wurrung and Bunwurung peoples.

Lisa Kennedy is a descendant of the coastal Pairebeenne Trawlwoolway clan in north-east Tasmania.

Sue Lawson is an author of young adult and children's books that are recognised for the sensitive way they explore growing up. She has written a number of books with Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir.

3. Read the story, then lead the class in circle time, asking questions like:
   - 'What did we see in the pictures in this book? What did we learn from these pictures?'
   - 'What did we learn from this story about how to show respect for others?'
   - 'What did we learn from this story about how to show respect for Country and care for Country?'
   - 'What are some of the ways that you show respect for classmates? Teachers? Family members? The places where you live, learn, play or visit?'

Activity 4B: An important message from Mr Beaky

Method

1. To model recognition and respect, introduce the authors and illustrators of the book *An important message from Mr Beaky*.
2. Tell students that this book was written by Cassie Leatham and Sue Lawson. Cassie Leatham is from the Taungurung people of the Kulin Nation. She is an Aboriginal artist, master weaver, traditional dancer, bushtukka woman and educator. Taungurung Country is in central Victoria. It includes areas around places called Mount Beauty, Mansfield, Yea, Kilmore, Seymour and Benalla. Sue Lawson has written many children's books, and often collaborates with Aboriginal authors and artists. This is a story about Mr Beaky who is a blue and white budgie. He is not green and yellow like budgies in the wild, but he is still a native bird. He can talk, and he can say words in the Taungurung language as well as in English. This story helps us to understand that being Aboriginal isn't about your skin colour or what your body looks like.
3. Read the story, then lead the class in circle time, asking questions like:
   - 'What did you learn about Mr Beaky from this story?'
   - 'How can this story help us to feel good about who we are, no matter who we are or what our bodies look like?'
   - 'How can this story help us to show respect for other people, no matter what their bodies look like?'

Activity 4C: Class display or book about respect

1. Invite students to respond to the texts by drawing pictures with captions or writing short stories for a class display or a class book called Respect. Drawings, captions and stories may relate to ways that people show respect for themselves, for other people and for Country.

Review

Review the learning intentions with the class. Invite students to note what they have done to learn more about respect from Aboriginal perspectives. Ask them if they were able to describe some of the ways people can show respect for themselves, for other people and for Country. Encourage them to give some examples taht demonstrate how they did this.

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 one that highlights a positive experience or celebrates the strengths and progress of the child or young person. It can be challenging for parents if they only hear about what is not working, without a broader conversation about the positive aspects of their child's engagement, participation, wellbeing or learning. A focus on the problem, rather than the person, can be particularly challenging for members of marginalised communities, or for those parents or carers whose children don't feel a strong sense of belonging or connection to the school.

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

Coaching point

'Country' is more than 'country'. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, the meaning of Country (capitalised) is much more than just the meaning of the English word 'country'. See this explanation from Professor Michael 'Mick' Dodson AM. 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 titleholders to land, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are still connected to the Country of their ancestors and most consider themselves the custodians or caretakers of their land [26].*

Source:
https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/acknowledgement-of-country-and-welcometo-country/

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.[27]*

More information about the importance of Country can be found in **What is Country** https://www.commonground.org.au/article/what-is-country from Common Ground.

Engaging in school-wide activities

Active recognition of significant 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 in the calendar are:

- 3 February – National Apology Day, the anniversary of the Australian Government's apology for past government policies and practices relating to the Stolen Generations (13 February 2008)
- 26 May – National Sorry Day, commemorating the Stolen Generations
- 27 May to 3 June – National Reconciliation Week. 27 May commemorates the anniversary of the 1967 referendum, when Australians voted to remove clauses from Australia's Constitution that discriminated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 3 June commemorates the 1992 Mabo decision when the High Court of Australia recognised native title, which is the recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights over their lands did survive British colonisation
- the first to the second Sunday in July – NAIDOC week, which celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 9 August – International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 13 September – the anniversary of the signing of the United Nations declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples on Thursday 13 September 2007.

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

Topic 02

Activity 5: Knowing and showing respect

Learning intentions

- Students will show what they think respect looks like or sounds like in different situations.
- Students will describe what it looks or sounds like when someone treats others with respect.
- Students will list some of the strengths that can help people to show respect.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 12 'strengths' cards (from previous activity) Drawing materials

Method

1. Explain to students that in this lesson they will show what they know about respect.
2. Invite some students to show what they think it looks like if someone asks to borrow a classmate's pencil in a respectful way. They might show things like using the word 'please', using the person's name, and waiting for a response before taking it.
3. Ask students to name what the opposite would be. What might it look like or sound like if someone acts in a rude way? They might suggest actions like grabbing, taking without asking, taking without waiting for a yes, demanding to have it, or not asking in a polite way.
4. Repeat the process by inviting demonstrations of what respect might look or sound like in the following situations:
    - asking someone if you can play with them
    - meeting someone for the first time
    - giving an answer during class discussion
    - asking an adult to read you a story
    - asking a parent or carer if you can have something to eat
    - explaining that you don't want to lend someone one of your toys
    - telling someone you don't want them to hug you
    - telling someone that you don't want to eat something they offered you.
5. As the demonstrations progress, work with students to describe what we mean by the word 'respect'. Capture some key words on the board that describe what they have seen in the actions and demonstrations. Respect can include:
    - thinking about how other people feel
    - being honest about what we want or don't want
    - saying 'please' when requesting something
    - being kind
    - asking for agreement, permission or consent before we take things
    - saying 'no' kindly but firmly when we don't want to let people borrow our things, touch us or hug us
    - waiting for our turn
    - saying 'thank you' when people help us
    - asking if others need help
    - noticing how we affect others
    - speaking in a friendly tone of voice
    - listening to others rather than interrupting them
    - telling people about what we need or want
    - treating other people in a fair way, even when we are angry
    - treating all people in a kind way, even if they are different from us
    - disagreeing in a polite way
    - apologising when we did the wrong thing
    - using the name a person likes to be called
    - keeping the rules
    - looking after things.
6. Explain, 'Respect is a big thing. We use it every day. We show respect for ourselves, for other people, for possessions, for rules and for our environment. We can use lots of our strengths to help us show respect, like being fair, friendly, kind, patient, brave, honest, generous, curious and forgiving.'
7. Make a display that captures the description of what respect looks like in action.
8. Invite students to each contribute a drawing that shows one example of respect in action.

Review

Ask students to comment on how well they were able to show what respect can look like or sound like in different situations. Ask them to name which examples of respect in action they think will be most useful in the playground.

Topic 02

Activity 6: Respecting and valuing difference

Learning intentions

- Students will describe some of the ways that people can differ.
- Students will describe some of the ways that families can differ.
- Students will share ideas about how we show respect for others, regardless of our diversity.

Equipment

- Room to move
- The 'respect' display (constructed from the previous activity)

Coaching point

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

Method

1. Explain to students that in this lesson they will learn about some of the ways that people and their families can be different. They will also learn about how we show respect for difference.
2. Begin with a focus on the ways that students can be different. Invite students to describe some of the ways that children can be different (for example, children can like different food or different games, or their bodies can be different, their names can be different, their languages can be different or their families can be different.)
3. Explain that the class will now work together to learn about some of the ways that students can have different favourite food and games.
4. Ask for some volunteers to name their favourite food. Invite enough answers to show that difference exists. Point out that having these differences does not make anyone better or worse than anyone else. We are just different, and difference is delightful and normal.
5. Ask for some volunteers to name their favourite games. Again, invite enough answers to show that difference exists. Point out that having these differences does not make anyone better or worse than anyone else. We are just different, and difference is delightful and normal.
6. Introduce students to the term 'diversity' by explaining that we use it to remind us that there are lots and lots of ways for people to be different from each other. Point out that as we look around the school, we can also notice that there are differences in bodies.
7. Provide examples of differences in height, hair or skin colour, gender, physical ability or disability, being shorter or taller, and being older or younger. Again, point out that having these differences does not make anyone better or worse than anyone else. We are all just a bit different from each other, and differences in our bodies are delightful and normal. We call this difference 'diversity'.

Coaching point

Sensitivity in relation to difference in bodies and families. Many students may already have been subjected to hurtful remarks about their bodies or families, as a result of negative commentary about their skin colour, body size, ability or other appearance or membership characteristics. It is important to normalise differences, promote empathy, and challenge hurtful remarks if they are made.

8. **Differences in families.** Return to inviting suggestions from students about the ways families can be different. Along with differences that may be noted – for example, family size, family religion, languages spoken at home, family ethnicity or culture, family wealth, and family homes and locations – use this as an opportunity to note that families might also have differences in relation to parent or carers.

9. Explain that some people have grandparents or other family members as carers, some have a mum and dad in different houses, some have one parent only, some have a mum and a dad living in the same house, and some have a stepdad or stepmum. Some may have 2 mums living together. Some may have 2 dads living together. Some may have parents who are fit and well, and some may have parents who are not well. These differences do not make anyone's family better or worse. Families come in all shapes and sizes. The differences in our families are delightful and something for us to feel proud of.
10. **Differences in gender and names.** Point out that another difference is difference in gender. Explain that some people are born with male body parts, some people are born with female body parts and some people have some differences in these body parts.

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

    Some people do not want to be called a 'boy' or 'girl', but rather something that is not oneor the other. We call that gender 'non-binary'. Some people feel they did not get a good match for their body parts. We call that 'transgender'. Some other people feel that the label 'boy' or 'girl' is not the right label for them and want a different word used. Sometimes they may want to use the word 'transgender' and sometimes they may want to use the word 'non-binary'.

    The important thing for us all to remember is that it is good to show respect for who people are. One way we can do that is to ask people about which name they want us to use, and whether they want us to call them a 'boy' or a 'girl'. They may want to be called 'transgender' or they may have other words they ask us to use. They may want us to say 'she', 'he' or 'they' when we talk about them. We show our respect by doing as they ask. One way we can be friendly and respectful is by introducing ourselves like this, 'Hello, I am [add name] and I use [she/her, he/him or they/them] pronouns. What is your name? And how should I refer to you?'

Coaching point

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

11. Arrange for students to make a drawing to help build a 'difference is delightful' display. Their drawing can show them being friends with someone who is different from them. Encourage students to add a title or some text to their drawing.
12. Arrange for students to present their images to the class, and to name the ways they show that difference is delightful and that we can all show respect for difference. Find a way to collect and display these works as a visual reminder that difference is delightful.
13. Revisit some of the focus on respect from the previous activity. Ask students for some examples of what they remember about showing respect in action.

Review

Revisit some of the focus on how we show respect in action from the previous activity. Invite students to give some examples of what respect can look like or sound like in action. Invite them to add some examples that show how we can respect differences in people's families, people's names and people's genders.

Coaching point

Modelling the use of inclusive language. Where gender need not be a main identifier, refer to 'siblings' rather than 'brothers and sisters', and 'students' rather than 'boys and girls'. Avoid positioning gender as binary by introducing your pronouns and checking which pronouns students use for themselves. A binary is something that consists of 2 things or can refer to one of a pair of things. When talking about genders, binary genders are 'man–woman' and 'boy–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–woman' or 'boy–girl' binaries. 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) [28].

Topic 02

Activity 7: The Anyone Who Game for a focus on similarities and differences

Learning intentions

- Students will play a game to learn about some of the ways they are similar and different.

Equipment

- Room to move

Coaching point
Positive role models. Seek opportunities to provide positive role models who demonstrate the great variety of ways that people with disability thrive, achieve and contribute.

Method

To play this game, arrange for the class to sit on chairs in a circle formation. Explain that the theme for the Anyone Who Game is finding out about the similar and different interests and preferences of people in the class (for example, anyone who likes getting up early, anyone who walks to school or anyone who likes dogs).

Stand in the center of the circle. You do not have a chair, but everyone else does. Call out 'Anyone who …' and add a phrase associated with the theme. When you call a category, all players of that category – for example, those who like getting up early – must leave their chairs and move to a different chair.

At this time, you rush to a chair and the last person left without a chair will make the next call in the game. They will also call 'Anyone who …' but add a different category. All those in this new category must swap to new seats.

If those in the middle find it hard to think of a category, you might remove your chair, and remain in the middle as a consultant to whisper suggestions to them. Alternatively, run the whole game with yourself in the middle.

Play a few rounds of the game. After the game, ask students:

- 'What did you learn from playing this game?'
- 'Did everyone have the same likes and dislikes?'

Remind students that we are all a bit different, and in many ways we can also be similar. We have our own likes and dislikes. It is important to respect people's differences and to understand and be able to tell other people what we like or dislike.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Seek examples of what they learnt in the game about similarities and differences.

Coaching point
Foster strengths through formative feedback. Use positive adjectives as you acknowledge a specific behaviour. This will help students to learn to value the qualities you identify and to understand the ways these strengths can be shown in action. This process can enrich how you provide positive and formative feedback about students' social capabilities. For example, 'It was kind of you to let others go first', 'It was generous to share out all the pens that way', 'I saw how patient you were waiting with your hand up' or 'I think it might have taken courage for you to have a go at that.' Refer to the list of 40 positive adjectives from Activity 2 for acknowledging strengths. Consider posting a display of these words, to provide a visual reminder for you and students.

Reflecting on everyday practice

- What strengths do you use and model within the classroom?
- What strategies do you use to develop the strengths of students?
- What strategies do you use to name and acknowledge the strengths of students?
- To what extent are cultural strengths acknowledged and celebrated within your classroom?

Extending the curriculum

- **Strengths detectives**. At the end of the day or in circle time invite students to share examples of when they saw someone using a particular strength.
- **Strength of the week**. Students can choose a strength of the week. They can plan some ways to use this strength. At the end of the day or end of week, they can share how they used the selected strength and how it helped them or others.
- To expand on the theme 'difference is delightful' in Activity 5, read a story that celebrates diversity or difference. As a class, work together to draft a story of friends who are delightfully different in many ways. Aim to list at least 3 differences and at least 2 kind actions these friends do for each other. Co-create a class book called 'Difference is delightful'. Publish one or more copies of the finished story for sharing with families.
- Invite students to identify strengths in the characters in stories that are read in the class or at home.
- Invite parents, carers or community guest speakers to talk about the strengths, traditions and ways of celebrating that are part of their cultural heritage.

Talking further

- Give students a copy of the 'strengths' list to take home. Encourage students to tell their parents or carers about how they are playing the Strength of the Week Game and invite their parents to play too.
- Give students a copy of the 'strengths' list to take home and encourage students to ask parents or carers about how a particular strength has helped them in their life.

Topic 03 Positive coping

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- reflect on their emotional responses
- describe ways to express emotions that show awareness of the feelings and needs of others
- practise techniques to deal with feelings of fear, frustration and anger.

Informed by the evidence base

As they grow and develop, all children will encounter situations where they feel worried, nervous and sometimes even scared.[29] Individuals deal with the demands on them by drawing on a range of coping strategies. Some strategies are more productive than others.[30] Helping students to learn a range of positive coping skills and allowing them to develop and practise them will enable them to cope more successfully with future changes and challenges. Resilience research shows that use of positive self-talk is associated with greater persistence in the face of challenge, whereas negative self-talk is associated with higher levels of distress, depression and anxiety.[31] Research studies have demonstrated that those who use positive self-talk about how they will approach and manage challenge are more likely to succeed. Negative self-talk includes over-personalising adversity, excessive self-blame, and exaggerating the likely duration and impact of adversity or failure. It includes focusing on what is wrong and ignoring what is right. Positive self-talk includes more realistic appraisal of capacity, circumstances and effort. It includes acknowledging and being grateful for the positives, recognising personal strengths and positive intentions, and realistic attribution of responsibility. Positive self-talk can be learnt or strengthened through practice. [32, 33]

Topic 03

Activity 1: 'Rock paper scissors' for a focus on turn-taking

Learning intentions

- Students will discuss the emotions they can feel when they lose or are excluded from a game.
- Students will learn strategies for working out who goes first in a game.
- Students will identify the strengths they can use to play well with others.

Equipment

- Music
- 'Strengths' cards and display (from Topic 2, Activity 3)

Method

1. Explain to students that they are going to play a game. The game will be used to talk about how to play well with each other.
2. Teach students to play 'rock paper scissors'. 'Rock' is made with the fist, 'paper' is made with the hand held open, and 'scissors' is made with the first 2 fingers held apart to look like scissors. In this game for partners, rock beats scissors, scissors beats paper and paper beats rock. This is because rock can break scissors, scissors can cut paper, and paper can cover rock. If both players throw the same shape, the game is tied and they play again. The players begin by counting to 3 and then making their move.
3. Demonstrate with some volunteers who are familiar with the game. Have students practise a few times with a partner.
4. Then explain that you will play some music. When the music plays, students will mix around the room. When it stops, they must take the nearest person as a partner, or wave their hand to get help to find a partner. They will show the friendly strengths they have by being willing to work with any person as their partner. Once they have their partner, they will play the game. The person whose shape is beaten sits down. When the music starts, everyone (including those sitting down) rejoin to mix, and to repeat the game.
5. After the game ask, 'What is 'rock paper scissors' used for?' Explain that this game is often used to help people to work out who goes first in a game, or who gets to choose a game. This can help friends to work these options out without fighting or arguing with each other.
6. Ask, 'What can it feel like when you must wait for a long time to get your turn in a game?' and 'What does it feel like when people won't let you join a game?' Write the words for some of these emotions on the board (for example, angry, frustrated, sad, lonely, impatient or jealous). Aim to match a coping strategy with each of the emotions. For example, strategies that can help when waiting for a long time might include things like talking to someone else who is waiting, watching the game to see how different people play it or cheering on the people in the game. Strategies that can help when people won't let you join in the game include finding a different game to play, starting a game you can play by yourself like playing in the sandpit, walking around to see what other people are playing and asking them if you can join in, going to the special place in the school yard where the helpers are, asking the teacher on yard duty for some suggestions.
7. Ask, 'Which strengths might you need to use to help you to do a good job of waiting?' Refer to the 'strengths' cards and display (from Topic 2, Activity 3) (for example, fair, forgiving, patient and generous).
8. Ask, 'Which actions or coping strategies might you need to use to help you to do a good job of waiting?' Look for coping strategies that help to manage impatience, frustration or overwhelming excitement, like taking a big breath, hopping up and down and counting how many people will go before you.
9. Invite students to return to the playspace for a game they can all play together, without eliminating anyone in a competitive way. For example, play 'musical statues' without elimination. In this version of the game, students move when the music plays and freeze when it stops. After the game, talk with them about how they used their strengths of selfcontrol to freeze, and how they used their strengths of noticing each other to avoid bumping into others while dancing around.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Ask students how playing games like 'rock paper scissors' helps them make fair decisions when they play. Ask a student to give an example of when they would use such an activity.
Ask, 'What did we talk about today that can remind us of what we need to do when we feel impatient or find it hard to wait for our turn or to share with others?'

Coaching point

Encourage students to identify when they need to use self-calming or selfcheering coping strategies. Teach students signals they can use to let you know when they need to use one of their self-calming or self-cheering coping strategies. Positively reinforce their capacity to identify when they need to deliberately self-regulate. Work with students to establish routines or strategies that are suitable for use in the classroom. For example, some students may find it helpful to use a fidget toy, work for a while in a quiet corner, get a drink of water, wear headphones for a short time, or engage with a short mindfulness activity like colouring. Work with colleagues and families to understand the needs and self-regulation strategies of neurodiverse and trauma-affected students.

Topic 03

Activity 2: Cheering up and calming down

Learning intentions

- Students will explore the difference between calming and cheering coping strategies.
- Students will identify times when they need to use calming or cheering coping strategies.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Short excerpts of calming music and bouncy, cheerful music
- A cheerful song for the class to sing together

Method

1. Explain, 'We all have times when we experience negative emotions like feeling sad, angry, jealous, lonely, frustrated or bored. However, we all have many coping strategies, or things we do that help us to manage. We do things to calm ourselves down or to cheer ourselves up.'
2. Explain that you are going to play different types of music. Students will move around the space in the way they think the music tells them to move – in a calm and floating way, or in a cheerful and bouncing way.
3. Play short sections of your selected music. Between the sections, ask students whether they found the music more calming or more cheerful.
4. Ask students to suggest some times when it is useful to have ways to cheer ourselves up (for example, when we feel lonely, sad or bored).
5. Ask students to suggest some times when it is useful to have ways to calm ourselves down (for example, when we are angry, afraid, anxious, jealous or very excited). Point out that some people like to listen to music or to sing a song to calm down, to find their courage or to cheer themselves up.
6. Choose a cheerful song for the class to sing.
7. Make time for students to draw a picture of someone doing something that cheers them up or that calms them down. Invite them to add a title or caption to explain. Provide opportunities for students to present their images, with an emphasis on describing the coping strategy shown to cheer or to calm.
8. Make a display of the pictures under the heading 'Coping strategies'.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Ask students whether the activity helped them to realise that there are lots of coping strategies we can use to help ourselves calm down or cheer up. Ask them to point to times when people might need to use calming or cheering strategies in the playground or in class.

Topic 03

Activity 3: Facing fears

Learning intentions

- Students will identify situations that can cause fear or anxiety.
- Students will describe coping strategies they can use to help manage their anxiety.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 'Coping strategies' list provided
- Pencils

Coaching point

Modelling supportive care. Some young students may share personal or sensitive information during class activities, because they can't yet discriminate between conversations that should be public or private. Should this happen, teachers can reframe the conversation by acknowledging that what they have shared sounds like an important or challenging situation that warrants a follow-up conversation in a more private context. For example, 'Thanks, [student name]. That sounds like an upsetting situation. It's best if the 2 of us talk more about this out of class, because it might be good for you or others to get some help to deal with this. If we talk after class, we can work out how to support you.' A response like this utilises a teachable moment through which to normalise help-seeking, and model proactive and supportive care in response to a sensitive student discussion. Reassure the class that if others have troubling situations, they too can talk to you out of class. Redirect the class activity to address the learning intentions and prioritise meeting with the student(s) in a more private, safe space within the school as soon as possible.

Method

1. Recite the nursery rhyme 'Little Miss Muffet'.* Invite the class to repeat in unison.

> *Little Miss Muffet sat on her tuffet*
> *Eating her curds and whey*
> *Along came a spider and sat down beside herAnd frightened Miss Muffet away.*

2. Ask:
   - 'What was Little Miss Muffet feeling?'
   - 'What did Little Miss Muffet do when she saw the spider?'
   - 'Is running away the only thing we can do when we are afraid? What else could we do?'
3. Ask students to pair–share to discuss, 'What are some of the things that can be scary for children around your age?' Collect answers and record some on the board (for example, talking to adults, doing new things, the dark, getting lost, getting hurt or people being mean.)
4. Explain that we all have fears, but we also have coping strategies or things we do to help us manage our strong feelings when we are afraid. For example, hugging a teddy or turning the light on are coping strategies that can help when we are afraid of the dark.
5. Ask students to suggest some strategies that they like to use for some of the different fears listed on the board. If the class does not develop a robust list use the 'coping strategies' list below to add some suggestions. You may wish to also share some strategies you use to manage anxiety.
6. Arrange for students to work in pairs or trios. They will act out a coping strategy and the class will guess what it is. Either allocate groups a 'secret' strategy or allow them to choose from the list.
7. When the groups present a strategy, ask them if anyone in the class has ever used this strategy and how did it help. Ask if there others that people have tried?
8. Read aloud the 'coping strategies' list. As you do so, ask students to mime someone using that strategy. After each response, ask students to put their hand up if they have ever used that strategy or think they could use that strategy. Tell students that they have shown that they have many coping strategies that

* Original author unknown.

can help them when they are in a challenging situation.

9. Invite students to draw a picture of themselves using a coping strategy that can help when they feel worried or anxious. They can add a caption that names this worry and the coping strategy.
10. Invite students to share their pictures in a small group, explaining the anxiety and the coping strategy. Arrange to add these images to the 'coping strategies' display created from the response to calming down and cheering up generated in the previous activity. Add to and display a list of positive coping strategies as a reference point for future conversations about what people can do to help themselves to cope effectively with a challenge.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Ask how the activity helped students to identify things that people can be afraid of or feel anxious about. Ask how the activity has helped them to think of positive coping strategies to use when they feel anxious or afraid. Seek examples.

Coaching point

Using positive coping strategies. Some coping strategies or reactions may be unhelpful or even harmful in one context or situation, although useful in another situation. Therefore, it is important for people to have a broad repertoire of coping strategies, and to develop the ability to choose those that are appropriate for the context. Explicit talk about how to cope, and about how to choose what might work in a range of situations, can assist students to broaden their coping repertoire.

Some Coping Strategies		
Cuddle a soft toy	Sing a happy song	Tell yourself, 'It's okay, my fear will go away'
Talk with your parent or carer	Ask for help	Imagine you are a superhero fighting the fear away
Play with a favourite toy	Fill your lungs like big balloons and let the air out slowly	Turn your light on and check your room
Spray the imaginary monster with a magic potion	Imagine you're floating on a cloud	Take some slow, deep breaths
Listen to some music	Listen to some music	Play with a friend or sibling
Ask for a hug	Run around outside	Do some drawing
Watch a favourite program	Read a book	Play ball
Imagine things turning out okay	Tell someone how you feel	Stay close to someone else that you know
Hold hands	Stand up straight and tall	*Add more strategies suggested by students below*

Topic 03

Activity 4: Managing anger

Learning intentions

- Students will name experiences that can make them feel angry.
- Students will practise strategies to help them control the way they express anger.

Equipment

- Image of a blank face
- A list of things that can make people feel angry

Method

1. Explain that students will be talking about anger. Ask students to help you understand what being angry means.
2. Point out that sometimes people get angry with us, and sometimes we get angry with other people.
3. Ask students to show you what their body would look like if they made it into an 'angry' statue. Provide an example of your own to remind them about how they have made 'emotions' statues in previous activities. Invite them to think of the kinds of things that can make them feel angry.
4. Collect a list of these experiences. Draw on the list below if you need to supplement their suggestions.

Things that sometimes cause me to feel angry

- *I have to wait a long time.*
- *I can't do something even when I try hard.*
- *I get teased.*
- *I am not allowed to do what I want.*
- *I have to share my things.*
- *I get the blame for something.*
- *Someone takes my things.*
- *I lose a game.*
- *I feel left out.*
- *I get into trouble.*
- *Someone says something mean about me or my family.*

Coaching point

Enhancing empathy. This activity helps to build empathy as students learn about how others may be affected by particular situations. Listening to each other's contributions can provide a form of peer-supported learning. The activity also provides an opportunity to revisit language to describe and understand more intensely felt emotions.

5. Ask students to name some of the hurtful things that people can sometimes do when they are angry. Seek suggestions like hitting others, throwing tantrums, saying mean things, yelling, breaking or throwing things, or sulking.
6. Invite students to name or show some of the more helpful things that people can do to help them control their angry feelings. Seek suggestions like walk away, sit on your hands, take a deep breath, look away, count to 10 or have a drink of water.
7. Explain that students will practise 3 different strategies for controlling anger and think about which one they like the best.
8. Bring students into a free space where they can move. Teach them the following strategies one by one, allowing time to try each one a few times. After each one, ask them how it makes them feel.

   Strategy 1: Balloon breathing

   Take up your 'angry' statue pose. Take in a deep breath, and then blow out slowly, just as if you were blowing up a balloon. Do this 3 times.

   Strategy 2: Pressing your hands together

   Take up your 'angry' statue pose. Now slowly press your hands together palm to palm. Hold them in front of your chest while you press hard. Then slowly let go.

   Strategy 3: Counting

   Take up your 'angry' statue pose. Now slowly count to 10. As you do, imagine you are taking control of your anger. You are in charge, not the angry feelings.

9. Point out that each of these strategies can help us to stay in control. Being in control of the way we show our anger is a strength that we call 'self-control'.
10. To practise one more time, ask students to run on the spot to get the 'hot' feeling of anger, take their 'angry' statue pose, then try each of the 3 strategies as you call them out. At the end of the practice, ask students which one of the 3 they prefer.
11. As a follow-up, ask students to draw their 'angry' face on half a page and name an experience that sometimes makes them feel angry. On the other half of the page they can draw a positive coping strategy that they can use to calm their anger.
12. Tell students that when we feel really angry it is important to find a way to calm or control ourselves, so we don't do hurtful things. Sometimes it is helpful to tell someone what we are angry about and ask for their help.
13. Add the self-control coping strategies to the 'coping strategies' display.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions by asking, 'How has the activity helped you to think about the sorts of things that can cause people to feel angry and the things we can do to stay in control? How do we make sure we do not show our anger in hurtful ways?' Seek one or 2 examples for each question.

Coaching point

Revisiting self-regulation strategies. Refer to the use of these angermanagement strategies at intervals across the year. Provide additional opportunities for students to practise them, and encourage students to try them when they are in heated situations.

Reflecting on everday practice

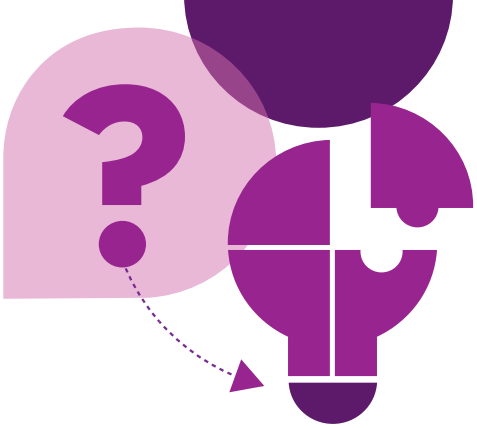
- What sorts of anger-management strategies do you favour in your personal and professional life?
- How do you model the use of productive coping strategies when things do not go to plan in your classroom?
- What strategies do you use to encourage students to use productive coping strategies?
- What systems or practices does your school have in place to support students who arefinding it difficult to cope with personal, social or academic challenges?

Extension activities

- Choose a story to read that includes a focus on a character who must deal with their fear or anxiety. Work with students to identify the fears that the character experiences. Ask students to put their hands up if they have ever felt these fears. Normalise fear and anxiety as something we all must deal with from time to time.
- Students could identify the strategies that characters in stories use to help them deal with their emotions. They could bring these books to share during circle time.
- Students could bring in music to share with the group that they think would be useful for cheering or calming.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk to their family members about what they do to cheer themselves up when they are feeling sad or disappointed, and calm themselves down when they are feeling angry or scared.
- Encourage students to ask their parents or carers what made them scared, angry and sad when they were little, and what helped them to cope.



Topic 04 Problem-solving

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- recognise that there are many ways to solve conflict
- describe similarities and differences in points of view between themselves and people in their communities
- identify cooperative behaviours in a range of group activities
- practise individual and group decision-making
- practise solving simple interpersonal problems.

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to help students learn a range of problem-solving skills through applied learning tasks to help them cope with future challenges.Problem-solving is identified by the World Health Organization as a key skill for health.[34] To be able to solve problems, children need to be able to think critically and evaluate the consequences of various actions.[5] Use of problem-solving tools to explore possible responses to challenges provides opportunity for students to develop critical-thinking skills, while also learning with and from a diverse range of students within small task groups. Use of scenarios or narratives has been shown to be an effective basis for discussion between autistic and non-autistic pairs, generating increased connectedness and understanding of each other.[35]

Topic 04

Activity 1: 'Let's work together' games for a focus on problem-solving

Learning intentions

- Students will describe the actions that help the team to work well together.
- Students will describe how teamwork can help when people have problems.

Equipment

Cooperative Game 1

- Room to move
- 2 or 3 toy hoops

Cooperative Game 2

- Room to move (best played in an outdoor or uncarpeted area)
- 6 or 7 dessert spoons
- 6 or 7 matching transparent containers
- A container of water (sand, dried beans or uncooked noodles can be substituted for water in cold weather)

Part 1: Threading the Hoop Game for cooperative problem-solving

Method

1. Ask students to form a large circle and join hands. Break the circle and place a large plastic toy hoop between 2 students in the circle. Without releasing hands, the group must pass the hoop around the circle and end at the starting point. This will entail them threading their bodies through the hoop. Introduce a second or third hoop into a different section of the circle to minimise the amount of time children spend waiting for the hoop to arrive near them.
2. After the game ask:

- 'What did the group members do to help the group to solve the problem of passing the hoop without breaking hands?'
- 'How and when do we use these skills in the classroom or playground to make it a friendly and helpful place for everyone?'
- 'What sorts of things slowed the group down in solving their problem?'

Part 2: Pass the Precious Water Game (or substitute another material for water)

Method

1. Divide students into groups of 4. Line them up and arrange for each line to radiate out from the container of water. Place the transparent cup at the end of each line, furthest away from the central point occupied by the container of water.
2. The leader of each team stands closest to the container of water. Give this person a spoon.
3. Explain that the leader is going to fill the spoon with water and then the spoon is going to be passed from one person to the next along the line, with the aim of spilling as little water as possible. When it reaches the last person in the line, they tip the water into the transparent container. The spoon is quickly passed back to the start and the action repeated. This should go on for a couple of minutes, after which you call 'stop' and see which container has the most water.
4. Ask:
   - 'What sort of actions helped the group to achieve their aim of spilling the least amount of precious water while being as quick as possible?' (For example, encouraging each other, concentrating, noticing each other, staying calm and not rushing.)
   - 'How and when do we use these skills in the classroom or playground to make it a friendly and helpful place for everyone?'
   - 'What sorts of things slowed the group down in solving their problem?' (For example, getting too excited, rushing or pushing.)
5. Remind students that if they have a real problem that they would like to discuss, they can come and see you out of class to talk more privately. Alternatively, they can send you a note to let you know they would like a time to talk.

Review

Review the learning intentions. Ask students to suggest what playing these games showed them about good teamwork and problem-solving.

Coaching point

Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can be used to help students mix and strengthen social connectedness, which is a protective factor for mental wellbeing. Structured play can assist those who are anxious in social situations to participate with their peers. Games can also be used to advance social and emotional skills.[15] Following participation in the game, ask students to identify the skills they used which can also be used in other life situations. Encourage them to find key messages in the games about how to conduct respectful relationships. Games can also be used to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise the class, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

Topic 04

Activity 2: What can I do when I've got a problem?

Learning intentions

- Students will think of possible actions to solve problems.
- Students will list the possible good and bad outcomes of different choices.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 6 toy hoops

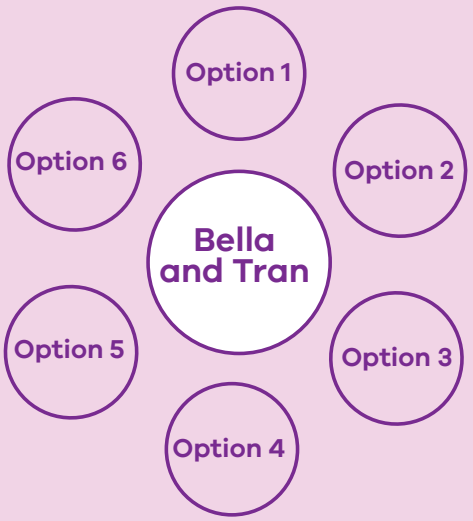
Method

1. Explain to the class that you will read them a story about someone who has a problem. Then you will work together to think about what the person with the problem could do.

Scenario: Dante

Dante was walking in the playground with his friends Bella and Tran when a Grade 5 student pushed past him saying, 'Get out of my way, brownie.' It was the same person who sometimes said nasty things like, 'If you tell anyone I will hit you really hard.' Bella and Tran could see that Dante felt scared and upset. They knew it was not right to say mean things about the colour of someone's skin. They knew this was not fair. They wanted to do something to help Dante. They knew it would be bad for Dante if this kept happening at school.

2. Ask students to identify:
   - Who has a problem?
   - What is the problem?
   - How might the problem be making them feel?
   - What might happen if they don't find a way to deal with this problem?
3. Use this as an opportunity to point out that mean talk about the colour of someone's skin is called 'racism'. Point out that this scenario also includes examples of violence and bullying, including the physical form (pushing) and the emotional and psychological forms (making threats). Remind students that people are not allowed to do this at school. Point out that there are others present in this scenario who can be used as a source of help, as well as others who are not present at the scene. Point out that sometimes problems just get bigger and bigger if we do nothing, or if we keep them a secret. When we have a problem that is too big to solve by ourselves, it is a good idea to get help.
4. Invite the class to do some creative thinking to work out some ideas about what Bella and Tran could do to help Dante.
5. Assemble in a circle. Invite students to put on their creative problem-solving hats (mime this action).
6. Place one toy hoop on the floor in the middle of the circle and ask 2 volunteers to sit in it as Bella and Tran. Ask them,
   - 'Please remind us, what is the problem?'
   - 'Do you need some help?'



7. Place more toy hoops around the central one. Explain, 'We will try to think of an idea to go into each of the hoops. Who can think of an action Bella and Tran can take to help? You can come and stand in this toy hoop to tell us your suggestion.' As students make their suggestions, invite them to come and sit inside a toy hoop. Reiterate their suggestion as they sit to help everyone remember it.

Coaching point

Focus first on peer support. Avoid focusing solely on what the victimised person can do, as this can signal that they are the one with the chief responsibility for solving the problem of racist treatment. The focus on what peers can do to provide support can signal that it is a shared responsibility to create a positive and inclusive playspace. Be mindful that there may be students in the class who have experienced racism or other similar forms of harassment directed against them by peers or near-peers. Remind students that if something like this happens to them, or to someone else, they should come and tell you about it because you would like to offer them help and support.

8. Once you have built some suggestions about what Bella and Tran can do, ask if anyone can think of anything else that Dante might do in response to this mean and racist treatment. Add more hoops until all the ideas have been suggested. Prompt with additional suggestions of your own if students miss some key possibilities, like asking for help, telling someone how they feel or telling the teacher.
9. Point out that they have now completed an important step in problem-solving. This is the step of thinking up some different options. Explain that the next step is to think about what it would look like to do follow these suggestions. To do this, students will act some of them out.
10. Invite some volunteers to show what a particular suggestion might look like or sound like. Provide some of your own modelling if needed. If you do this, invite students to 'coach' you by providing tips and letting you know if you got the job done or need to make some changes and repeat your performance. Elicit as much modelling and help from students as you can.
11. Point out that students have now completed another important step in problem-solving. This is the step of thinking about how to take the actions suggested. This step can help students to think about what might work for them.
12. Refresh students' memories about the suggestions made in each of the hoops. Ask students to come and stand beside the hoop that has the idea they think would work for them if they tried it. Ask these students about why they think this might be a good option for them.
13. Invite the class to move to one of the hoops where they can see there is a downside, or something that might be difficult or challenging about this option. For example, maybe something could go wrong for Bella, Tran or Dante, or for someone else involved. Ask some of these students about what they think could be the downside of this option.
14. Point out that they have now completed a third important step in problem-solving – the step of thinking about the downside of the options.
15. Explain to students that now they have thought about:
    - the different options
    - how to take the suggested actions
    - the upside and downside of different ideas.
16. Give students another chance to choose the option they think might work for them if they had a similar problem. Invite all students to move to their final choice.
17. Reinforce that often there is more than one way to solve a problem, and that sometimes we must try more than one suggestion before we find something that works.

Review

Review the learning intentions by asking students how the 'thinking hoops' activity helped them learn about what people can do when they have a problem. Invite students to think about and share examples of when they might use this process. Remind students that they can tell you, another teacher or a wellbeing leader if they have a bigger problem they need help with.

Coaching point

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

Topic 04

Activity 3: Real-world problem-solving

Learning intentions

- Students will use the 'thinking hoops' model to help them identify options for children experiencing problems.
- Students will identify possible sources of help for problems.
- Students will act out some problem-solving and help-seeking strategies.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 6 toy hoops
- Scenarios for problem-solving
- 'Lots of options' checklist

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.)

Method

1. Review the 'thinking hoops' model students used in Activity 2 to think about the options Bella, Tran and Dante could use to solve a problem. Remind students that this model helped them to think of lots of different ideas before choosing which might be the best one to try. Explain that they will use a similar model to think about how to help some children solve some real-life problems that they are having. Encourage a spirit of helpfulness as the class gathers to think about what might be helpful to the student in need.
2. Explain:

   First we will read the scenario. Then the class will think up different options and stand in the hoops, so we can all see how many suggestions we have. Then we can act them out, so we can see how the different ideas might work. Then we will look at the upsides and the downsides of the ideas. Then each of us will choose what we think is the sort of advice we like the best. Because we are all different in some ways, we may choose different ideas, and that is okay.
3. Arrange students in the problem-solving circle with their thinking hats on. Place the toy hoops at the ready. Read one of the scenarios provided. Use the brainstorming and roleplaying model outlined in the previous activity to work on the problem. Make time to demonstrate what different suggestions might look like in action by using the role-playing phase of the activity.
4. Refer to the 'lots of options' checklist provided below to help prompt ideas for different options.

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

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

Review

Conclude the activity by inviting students to review the learning intentions. Has the activity helped them identify lots of options for people who are experiencing problems? How? Has the activity helped them to think about different sources of help for people who have problems?

How? Repeat back some of the helpful strategies that you heard students suggest or saw them demonstrate in the role-plays.

Coaching point

Revisit the problem-solving model. Use the problem-solving model from time to time to work with the class to solve problems that present for them. Revisiting the process can help to reinforce the importance of slowing down and identifying possible options as key steps in problem-solving

Reflecting on everyday practice

- How do you deal with problems in your personal and professional life?
- What are the most common problems within your class?
- What role do you play in empowering and assisting students to work through their problems?

Extension activities

- Students could choose one of the scenarios and draw a picture of the solution they think will best help the character.
- Encourage students to notice how characters in books solve problems and share the ideas during circle time. This information could be collated into a chart of solutions that students find helpful. Over time students could see the problem-solving ideas that are used most often or are the most helpful.

Talking further

Encourage students to ask members of their families for help to solve problems. They could share with their siblings or family the 'thinking hoops' model as a way for thinking about solving problems.

Scenarios for problem-solving

Scenario 1

Aisha was worried about her friend Charlotte who never had very much food at lunchtime. Sometimes Charlotte asked for things from Aisha's lunchbox. One day, when Aisha asked why she didn't bring more of her own food, Charlotte started crying and ran away to the corner of the playground. Aisha was worried about her friend not having enough food.

What could Aisha do? What could other students or the teacher do to help?

Scenario 2

Leo sometimes got into trouble for forgetting to bring his reader to class. He felt a bit shy about telling the teacher that sometimes he forgot because he moved between his dad and mum's different houses.

What could Leo do? What could other students or the teacher do to help?

Scenario 3

Malika was going to stay with her grandparents for a few days while her mum went to hospital to have a new baby. Malika liked playing at their house, but she didn't like the dark corridor and the scary feeling of being far away from her mum at night. She was scared she would wet her bed if she wasn't brave enough to go down the corridor to the toilet in the dark.

What could Malika do? What could her grandparents do to help?

Scenario 4

Ali loved playing on the monkey bars with his friends Sarah and Jarrah. They always took it in turns. When Jack arrived, he asked Ali if he could play with them too. Ali said yes, but Jack started pushing in on everyone else's turn, and soon Ali, Sarah and Jarrah felt very annoyed because it spoilt the game.

What could Ali do? What could other students or the teacher do to help?

Scenario 5

Viv got a special set of coloured pencils for their birthday and took them to school. When Viv used their new pencils to draw a picture, some friends saw how nice the pencils were and asked to borrow them. Soon the pencils were going all over the classroom. Viv was worried people might lose or damage them or not give them back.

What could Viv do? What could other students or the teacher do to help?

Scenario 6

The principal came in to introduce a new student called Arpita. Arpita was in a wheelchair and looked a little shy to be meeting new people. The principal asked the class what they could do to support Arpita to meet new friends and learn where to find the important places in the school, like the canteen, library and playspaces. The class had lots of good suggestions. The teacher arranged for Arpita to sit next to Maddison. Maddison felt really proud to be chosen as a buddy and she wanted to be a helpful friend, but she had already forgotten some of the suggestions made by her classmates, and she wasn't sure what to do at playtime.

What could Madison do to help Arpita feel happy about being in her new school? What could other students or the teacher do to help make sure Arpita has a good time at school?

‘Lots of options’ checklist			
Find out what other people would like to do	Sing a happy song	Take a deep breath	Tell them to stop
Make some suggestions	Listen to what other people are trying to say	Say sorry	Tell people how the problem is affecting you
Smile	Ask a friend to help	Suggest a different activity	Ask people for their suggestions
Have a vote	‘Rock paper scissors’	Make a plan	Walk away to a quiet place
Tell a teacher	Tell people how you feel	Think up some ideas together, then choose one	Agree to take turns
Talk to your parent or carer	Seek help from an older student	Move to a safer place	Invite people to play with you

Topic 05 Stress management

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- identify and describe personal coping skills and explain how these contribute to family and school life
- discuss how they can use self-calming strategies to manage themselves in stressful situations.

Informed by the evidence base

Stress is a normal part of life, especially as children get older. Children who cope better with life stressors develop good mental health and wellbeing.[30] However, students need assistance to recognise their personal signs and symptoms of stress. They also need practice in how to develop suitable strategies for dealing with stress. These learning opportunities will better prepare children to cope effectively with challenges in the future.

A study with children from grades 3 and 4 investigated the stressors they experienced at school, along with the strategies they used to cope. It found that students faced a ranges of stressors including interpersonal conflict arising from unfair play, anxiety about asking for help from peers or teachers, and worry about 'bad grades' or performance challenges related to schoolwork and expectations.[36]

The 2022 Mission Australia Youth Survey found that almost 3 in 10 young people aged 15 to 19 years (29 per cent) reported high psychological distress, 16 per cent reported their overall mental health and wellbeing as poor, and almost a quarter reported feeling lonely most of the time.[37] Almost half of females and gender-diverse young people reported feeling extremely or very concerned about body image (females 47 per cent, males 15 per cent, and gender diverse 49 per cent). Many young people reported feeling extremely or very concerned about mental health (females 53 per cent, males 25 per cent, and gender diverse 72 per cent) and school or study problems (females 47 per cent, males 23 per cent, and gender diverse 46 per cent). Close to 2 in 5 (38 per cent) young people who expressed strong climate concerns reported they were also experiencing high psychological distress, and one in 5 (23 per cent) of these young people had a negative outlook about their future.[37]

Students reported finding it hard to generate coping strategies, indicating the importance of an applied focus on developing coping strategies suitable for a range of contexts. A review of mindfulness interventions used with children and young people found that body-centered meditations and mindful observations guided by explicit instructions led to improved socioemotional outcomes.[38]

Topic 05

Activity 1: The Slow-motion Giant Mirror Game for creating a calmer classroom

Learning intentions

- Students will play a slow-motion game to help them talk about self-control.
- Students will talk about things they can do to calm themselves when they feel anxious.

Equipment

- Room to move

Method

1. Introduce the Slow-Motion Giant Mirror Game. In this game, everyone follows the leader, trying to copy them exactly, just as if they were part of a giant mirror. The leader moves in slow motion.
2. Arrange the class in a circle or standing facing you. Begin a slow movement, checking the class to see that they can keep up. Aim for a slow meditative style, like in tai chi. After a while you can name a student to take over as leader, emphasising the need for slow motion. Invite them to pass the leadership on when they have had a turn.
3. After the game, ask the class:
   - 'What did you do to help you to be such a good mirror?' Examples include watching others carefully and controlling my body.
   - 'How did the game make you feel?'
   - 'What else can we do to calm our classroom down when it gets too noisy or fast?'

Coaching point

Making links between the game and the learning intentions. Point out that students have shown strong self-control in this game. This means they have taken charge of their body and made sure it is doing exactly what they are telling it to do. This is an important skill for the classroom and for life.

Review

Review the learning intentions by inviting students to reflect on how the game has reminded them about some strategies they can use to help themselves calm down when they feel stressed.

Topic 05

Activity 2: What is stress and what can we do to cope?

Learning intentions

- Students will develop a definition of stress.
- Students will describe how stress can be felt in the body.
- Students will identify experiences that can cause people to feel stressed.
- Students will describe strategies people can use to help them cope when they feel stressed.

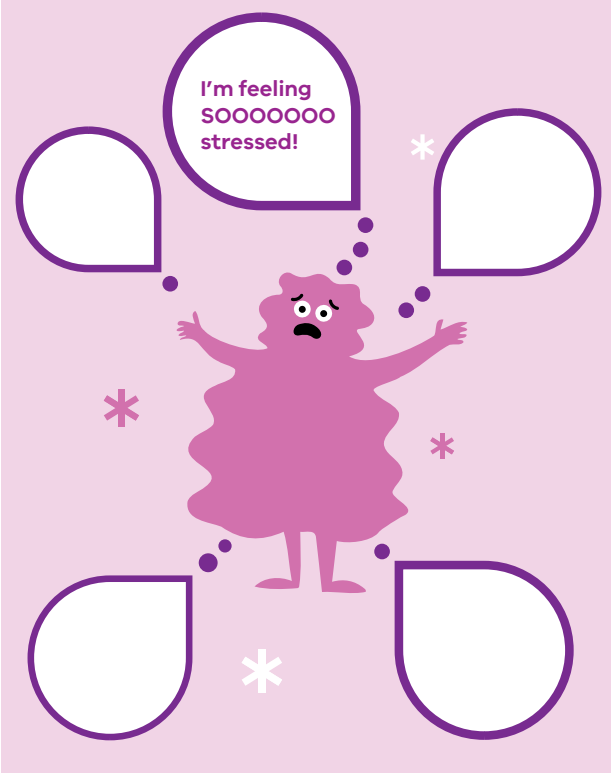
Equipment

- Image of Wibbly (provided) or a puppet to use as the Wibbly character
- Large sheet of paper and pens

Method

1. Draw or present an image of Wibbly. Alternatively, use a puppet to represent Wibbly, ensuring the puppet looks stressed.
2. Introduce Wibbly, 'This is Wibbly. They have come to class to ask for some help because they are feeling stressed.' Ask, 'What is stress?'
3. Work with the class to build a definition for the word 'stressed'. Explain, 'Because Wibbly told us they are stressed, we need to make sure we know what that word means. What do you think Wibbly means when they say they are feeling "stressed"? Let's see if we can explain what that word means'

Stress is what a person feels when they are worried or feel uncomfortable about something. Sometimes people feel stressed when there is too much to do, or when something is hard, scary or new for them.



4. Explore with students what they imagine feeling stressed might be like for Wibbly. Ask:
   - 'What emotions do you think Wibbly is feeling?' Revisit the language from the emotional literacy lessons, for example, worried, nervous, afraid, angry, scared or anxious.
   - 'How might being stressed make Wibbly's body feel?' Students might suggest bodily sensations like feeling shaky, tearful, sick in the stomach, wobbly in the legs, heart beating fast, breathing fast, or feeling tight or tense all over.
5. Explain that Wibbly is not very good at speaking, so the class will have to guess what might have happened to cause Wibbly to feel so stressed. Tell them that the only clue you have from Wibbly is that they get stressed about the same sorts of things that can make children of their age feel stressed.
6. Ask students to pair–share first and then contribute their ideas about some possible causes of stress. Write some key suggestions on the board.

7. Indicate to the class that Wibbly does indeed feel stressed about some of these things, and they want the class to help with 3 of these different causes of stress. At this point you may choose the 3 stressors yourself or invite 3 different students to choose one each. Consider using a random strategy to select students, like pulling names out of a box or using a digital tool.
8. Once the stressors have been selected, work on them one by one.
9. Explain that to help Wibbly, students are going to recommend things that might help them to cope with the first challenge. Remind them of the cheering-up, calming-down strategies and anger-management strategies they developed in earlier activities (see Topic 3). Ask them to pair–share first, to think of some suggestions. Then invite students to share their ideas with the class.
10. Interact with Wibbly to ask them which suggestions appeal. Communicate back from Wibbly that they intend to try at least 3 of the suggestions. Explain why some suggestions seem attractive, useful or manageable for Wibbly.
11. Work through the additional stressors using a similar approach. If needed, supplement students' suggestions.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions by asking them to reflect on what they learnt in the activity. Ask, 'Has the activity helped you to understand what stress is?' Ask for a student to summarise this. Ask, 'Has the activity helped you to think about how stress feels in the body?' Seek one or 2 examples. Ask, 'Has it helped you to explore the kinds of things that can cause people to feel stressed? Has it helped you to remember the things people can do to help them cope when they feel stressed?'

Coaching point

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

Topic 05

Activity 3: Relaxation techniques

Learning intentions

- Students will practise some relaxation techniques.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Wibbly puppet (if using the puppet option)
- Letter from Wibbly
- 'Melting moments' and 'Floating clouds' scripts

Method

1. Tell the class you have a letter from Wibbly. It says: Dear students, Thank you. I like your ideas for cheering me up and calming me down. I can't wait to try them. But I am wishing for one more thing. What can I do to relax myself when I am lying in my bed at night, but still feeling too stressed to go to sleep? Have you got any suggestions for me?
2. Ask for suggestions from the students. Write some keywords on the board.
3. Tell students that they will try out 2 special relaxation exercises to see if they think they would work for Wibbly when they are trying to get to sleep at night.
4. Arrange for them to lie down on their backs (or if space does not allow, to sit with their heads on their desks).
5. The first exercise is called 'Melting moments'. Use the script below or devise your own.

   Close your eyes. Scrunch up all your muscles so you are as hard as a block of ice. Hold tight. Now slowly let go. Scrunch up again. Now let go. This time, imagine your block of ice is melting into the floor. Your muscles are getting softer as you melt. Let your fingers melt. Let your feet melt. Let your back melt. Now wiggle your fingers to wake them up. Wiggle your toes to wake them up. Open your eyes. Sit up slowly.
6. Ask students how the exercise made them feel. What happened to their bodies? Would they recommend this for Wibbly to try?
7. Invite them to try the second relaxation exercise. It's called 'Floating cloud'. Ask them what they think it might be about. Then arrange for them to lie down again and listen to the story. Use the script below or devise your own.

   Close your eyes. Picture a fluffy white cloud. It is as gentle and soft as feathers. Imagine you are lying on this soft and gentle cloud. It makes your arms relax and feel floaty. It makes your legs relax and feel light and floaty. It makes your back feel soft. When you are all soft and settled, the cloud is going to slowly lift you up and take you for a ride. It is going to take you to a really nice place. Can you imagine now what you can see in this special place? Is there something nice there? Is there something fun to do? Is there something peaceful there? In a moment your cloud will be bringing you back to the classroom. Imagine that it is gently setting you down now. Wiggle your fingers to show you are back. Wiggle your toes to show you are back. Open your eyes, and slowly sit up.
8. Ask students how that made them feel.
   - Did they imagine any nice things in the special place they went to on their ride on the cloud?
   - Would they recommend this for Wibbly to try?
   - Which of the 2 exercises did they prefer? Why?
   - Would they like to try them again in class one day?
   - Could they try them at home when they are getting ready to sleep?

Review

Review the learning intentions by inviting students to reflect on what they have learnt about how to relax their body when they feel stressed.

Coaching point

Encourage students to identify when they need to use self-calming or selfcheering coping strategies. Teach students signals they can use to let you know when they need to use one of their self-calming or self-cheering coping strategies. Positively reinforce their capacity to identify when they need to deliberately self-regulate. Work with them to establish routines or strategies that are suitable for use in the classroom. For example, some students may find it helpful to use a fidget toy, work for a while in a quiet corner, get a drink of water, wear headphones for a short time, or engage with a short mindfulness activity like colouring. Work with colleagues and families to understand the needs and self-regulation strategies of neurodiverse students and trauma-affected students.

Topic 05

Activity 4: Making new friends – from stress to strategies

Learning intentions

- Students will provide suggestions about what people can do to make new friends.
- Students will make suggestions about what helps when you are worried about making new friends.

Equipment

- Paper, pens and envelopes
- Post-office box
- Wibbly puppet (if using the puppet option)
- Letter from Wibbly

Method

1. Inform the class that you have received a letter from Wibbly. It says:

> *Dear students, I am very glad to have all your helpful ideas. Tonight, I am going to try the 'Melting moments' and the 'Floating cloud'. I have one other problem that I was too shy to tell you about at first. Because you have been so kind and helpful I feel I can now trust you.*
> *I am very scared because I have to go to a new place to live and I need to make new friends. I have forgotten how to make new friends. Do you have any suggestions? I would be very glad to get your letters with some ideas for me to try.*

2. Put students in pairs and ask them to brainstorm some ideas about what Wibbly can do to make friends. Collect the ideas from the class.
3. Encourage students to show their suggestion in action with short demonstrations or roleplays.
4. Explain that everyone will write a letter or draw a picture for Wibbly, telling them about some of the things that can be done to help them to make new friends. The letters will go in the post-office box and each day we will read some out and then pin them up near Wibbly.

5. Demonstrate a model for constructing a letter on the board. Give students time to construct their letters.
6. Arrange for students to present their letters to the class before they post them in the classroom post-office box to be read at circle time over the following days and weeks.

Review

Invite students to reflect on the learning intentions. Ask, 'Has the activity helped you to think of things that people can do when they are worried about how to make new friends? Has the activity reminded you of what people can do or say when they want to make friends?' Invite students to note whether they might like to use some of these strategies during playtimes.

Coaching point

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

Reflecting on everyday practice

- What strategies do you use to deal with your own stress?
- How do you manage stressful situations in the classroom?
- How can you structure times in the week for students to practise activities like exercise, relaxation and creative expression?
- What strategies does your school have in place to create a calming environment for students?

Extension activities

- Students could draw a picture of Wibbly after they have used one of the de-stressing suggestions, depicting what a relaxed Wibbly looks like.
- Students could volunteer to create their own meditation to be used in the class. They could model it on the 'Melting moments' or 'Floating cloud' visualisations.

Talking further

- Encourage students to talk with parents or carers about what they like to do to relax when they feel stressed.
- Encourage students to try some relaxation exercises at home.

Topic 06 Help-seeking

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- practise solving simple interpersonal problems
- identify ways to care for others, including ways of making and keeping friends
- discuss the importance of seeking help when dealing with problems that are too big to solve alone
- practise seeking help from adults and peers.

Content Advice

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

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

The help-seeking behaviours of children and young people are fundamental to their mental health and wellbeing. Encouraging and fostering help-seeking behaviours is one way to improve mental health and wellbeing.[39] There are several barriers that children and young people can face when it comes to help-seeking, including embarrassment, shame, fear of making things worse, fear of getting into trouble, lack of confidence to initiate conversations with an adult, anxiety about not being believed, and lack of knowledge about who to approach.[39] Additionally, research shows that those who are in the most need of help for psychological distress may be least able to seek it, due to the burdens affecting their emotional competence and confidence at that time.[40] Therefore, it is important to work with students to identify the situations when help from appropriate adults is warranted, make sure they are aware about help-seeking avenues, and ensure they feel confident to persist in seeking help from appropriate sources when needed.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

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

Sample script for content advice for Topic 6

Across the next few lessons we will talk about ways to seek help or to help others. We will talk about situations when people are distressed because they have been left out, or hurt by others, or worried about something that has gone wrong. We will learn about this because we want to make sure we know how to help our friends or ask for help if this sort of thing happens. Sometimes, when we hear a story about someone being unsafe or hurt, it might make us feel a bit wobbly inside. Before we start each lesson, I will let you know if there will be scenarios about children who have been hurt, left out or called mean names. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset or wobbly, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support. If a topic is not good for you at any time, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else, here at school or at home, and that is also okay.

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

Topic 06

Activity 1: The Life Raft Game for a focus on help-seeking

Learning intentions

- Students will play a game that involves them helping other players.
- Students will use the game to talk about how friends can help each other.

Equipment

- Room to move
- 8 toy hoops (or if played outside, 8 chalked safety zones)
- Music

Method

1. Distribute 6 to 8 toy hoops in the space depending on the size of your class. Ensure there is plenty of room between the toy hoops.
2. Explain that the toy hoops are the life rafts. The space around them is the sea. When the music plays, everyone is swimming around in the sea. When the music stops, this is a sign that the shark is coming, and everyone must get into a life raft. To be safely in, they must have both feet inside. When they swim for the life raft they must move silently and in slow motion, so the shark does not see where they are.
3. The aim is to get everyone into a life raft and to keep them still and silent until the shark is gone. This means that if they notice some life rafts are too full, they will have to help other people to see where they should swim instead. If their own life raft has space, they may need to wave and signal that people can come and join them. When the music plays everyone must swim again.
4. Before you start the game, ask students to demonstrate how they'll help each other get inside a hoop or how they will signal where there is room somewhere else for those who can't fit on other life rafts.
5. Play a few rounds of the game. If the group needs more challenge, remove one of the life rafts.
6. After the game, ask:
   - 'What did you do to help each other in this game?'
   - 'What would happen if nobody helped anyone else in this game?'
   - 'Where do you need to use those same helping skills in real life?' Examples include, in the playground, in the classroom or at home.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

7. **Inform students:**

   In our next lesson, we will be talking more about when a friend has a problem. We will work out how to help other people, including our friends. Remember, you can come and tell me if you or someone else has a problem, and you can also tell other teachers, for example, wellbeing staff.

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Review

Review the learning intentions. Ask students how the game helped remind them of ways that friends can help each other when they face challenges or problems.

Coaching point

Managing safety in games. Use of slow motion is an important safety mechanism in this game. If students are too excited, practise moving in slow motion first, and play with half the class at a time.

Topic 06

Activity 2: I can help my friends

Learning intentions

- Students will practise ways to help a friend who has a problem.

Equipment

- Helping scenarios
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

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, and students from experiencing any distress at hearing any 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. Inform students:

   Today we will be talking about when a friend has a problem. We will work out how to help other people, including our friends. How do you feel about what we will learn? If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy that might help you to stay calm, for example, taking some deep breaths. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay.

2. Ask the class to work with you to build a description of what a good friend does. Collect ideas and put key phrases on the board. Emphasise the importance of the actions that the class has defined. Explain that the focus of the next activity is going to be helping friends when they have problems.

3. Explain, 'As well as seeking help, we can give help. We can use our strengths and be a good friend when we work to help others with their problems.' Read through the following scenario (or devise one suited to your class).

   Bayan was feeling lonely because they could not find friends to play with during lunchtime. Bayan went to play with their older stepbrother, Nullah, who was with the Grade 5 students on the other side of the playground. But Nullah said gently, 'You can't play with us. Our game is too fast and rough for people who are little. You could get hurt. Let's go ask your classmates for help.'

4. Ask students, 'What can other children do to help Bayan?' Collect ideas.

5. Select a volunteer to be Bayan. Put them in a chair at the front of the room and pretend they are sitting alone on the school bench. Invite students who have provided the helping ideas to take turns to demonstrate what the idea would look like in action. After each demonstration, ask the student who is playing Bayan how that action might make them feel. Rotate students through the role of Bayan, and seek additional demonstrations that explore other suggested options.

Coaching point
Gender inclusion. Bayan is a gender-neutral name. Encourage students to assume that Bayan could be a child of any gender.

6. Explain that students will now work in groups to advise another student who has a different problem. Organise students into groups of 3 or 4.

Coaching point
Reminders for group work skills. It can be useful to remind students of the skills they will use when working together on group tasks. Invite them to remind each other of the expectations prior to commencing the task, for example, play fair, listen well, be kind, be patient and encourage others.

7. At the end of the task, ask groups to self-assess how they worked as a team. Invite them to think of at least one thing they did well, and if there is anything they could do better in the future.
8. Give each group a peer support scenario to work on. Read them the scenarios aloud as you allocate them, or ensure each group has a reader who is confident to read to their peers. Explain that their job is to think of 3 or more different ways for other children to help the character with the problem. They can either explain their idea verbally or show it in a roleplay when they report back to the rest of the class.
9. Arrange for a report-back from each group. Read out the key scenario for the presenting group and invite them to share their suggestions. Ask the other students if they have additional suggestions to make.
10. Provide positive feedback on their thinking about the different ways that children can help friends and schoolmates.
11. Point out that it is good to be able to help friends solve problems. But it is also important to know when to get help from an adult. Tell students that in future activities there will be a chance to learn about help-seeking from adults.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

12. Inform students:

    In our next lesson, we will be practising ways to seek help from adults for problems that children might have. Remember, you can come and tell me if you or someone else has a problem, and you can also tell other teachers, for example, the wellbeing staff.
13. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
14. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intention by asking them to describe how they thought of ways to help friends. Ask, 'Was it helpful to practise some of these ideas in the role-plays or to see other students show ideas this way?' Invite them to note when they might use these skills or ideas in everyday life.

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Helping scenarios

Scenario 1

Maali had a bad day. When Maali tried to join in the game their friend pushed them away and said, 'You're stupid, so you can't play.'

What can other students do to help?

Scenario 2

Ava could not remember what the teacher had told the class to do. She found it hard to read the writing on the board. Jan, the teaching assistant who normally helped Ava, was away sick today. Ava started
to look sad and put her head in her hands.

What can other children do to help?

Scenario 3

Fung and his friends were running in the playground when Fung fell over. His friends didn't notice
and kept running. Fung's knee started to bleed, and he started to cry.

What can other children do to help?

Scenario 4

Tami lost her jumper somewhere in the playground. Then the bell started ringing to go to class. Tami was worried because her parents couldn't afford to buy a new one. Tami started to cry.

What can other children do to help?

Scenario 5

Lee was sitting all alone at playtime. They didn't look very happy. Two groups of children from their grade were playing nearby. One group was playing 'chasey'. The other group was playing on the climbing equipment.

What can other children do to help?

Create additional scenarios as needed to address common needs that students may experience in your school setting.

Topic 06

Activity 3: How do I ask for help?

Learning intentions

- Students will practise ways to seek help from adults.
- Students will practise ways to say what the problem is when they are seeking help.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Help-seeking scenarios
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today we will be practising ways to seek help from adults. If this topic makes you feel sad or worried, remember to try a coping strategy, for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.You might want to talk later with someone else, here at school or at home, and that is also okay.

2. Explain,

   Problems come in different sizes. Some are small problems. These ones we can usually manage by ourselves. Sometimes we have medium-size problems. These ones we can often solve with help from our friends. But sometimes we have bigger problems, or lots of problems all at once, or problems that just won't go away. When this happens, it is best to get an adult to help.

3. Ask students to suggest examples of the sort of problems that they can usually manage by themselves. They might suggest things like needing to get a tissue to blow their nose or dropping the contents of their school bag. Use this opportunity to gain insight into what students regard as problems they can solve by themselves.

4. Ask students to think of some bigger problems for which children should ask for adult help. Use this opportunity to gain insight into what students regard as bigger problems. Reinforce that it is important to seek adult help when someone is sick or hurt, or when something unsafe is happening. It is important to get adult help if something is happening to make a person feel bullied or scared, especially if this problem lasts for a long time. It is also important to get help if someone else is asking to keep the problem a secret. It is not good to try to keep something a secret when it is a problem. When the problem feels too difficult or long-lasting to solve on your own, this is a good time to ask for help.

5. Explain that the next activity will give students a chance to practise the help-seeking someone might do when they go to an adult for help about a big problem. Provide a worked example. Ask a volunteer to be the adult and sit in the teacher's chair. Explain that you will be the student who comes to ask for help. Use one of the student-suggested problems as the focus for your help-seeking. Model a short role-play where you play the part of the student who is asking the teacher for their attention.

Example

Student character (role to be played by the teacher to model help-seeking): Teacher, can you please help me?

Teacher character (role to be played by a student): What is wrong?

Student character: I am feeling scared.

Teacher character: Can you tell me what is making you feel scared?

Student character: Some big kids are being mean to me and my friends when we are playing in the sandpit.

Teacher character: It's good you told me this. I'll do my best to help. Let's make a plan.

6. Following the role-play, invite the class to describe what was done to gain the helper's attention and tell them why help was needed. Reinforce that getting the helper's attention and telling the helper what they need help with are 2 important steps for them to use when help-seeking.
7. Arrange for students to role-play in pairs or trios. First, they will need to talk about their scenario and think of things to say. Then they will need to work out who is to be the adult helper and who is to be the child or help seeker. If in trios, 2 people can come together to seek help. The person playing the adult will sit on a chair, and the people playing the help seekers will arrive to get their attention and ask for help. Allocate one of the help-seeking scenarios to each group. Use the scenarios from the list below, or devise others suited to your students.
8. After time to prepare, invite some volunteers to show their response to the help-seeking scenario they worked on. Encourage students to comment on the strengths and skills shown in their responses to each scenario. Emphasise the importance of asking for attention, saying what the problem is and saying they need help. Invite some replays to demonstrate how to do this.
9. Provide opportunity for students to return to their working space and reverse roles, so they get a turn at playing the opposite role in the scenario. They can either use the same scenario, or you could allocate a new scenario. Allow further time for students to show their work.
10. Ask students to describe some of the emotions that people can feel when they need to go for help with a bigger problem. Reinforce:

    At times, help-seeking can be hard, especially if we are a bit scared or embarrassed. We might need to use our courage. It can be helpful to take a friend with us when we need to ask for help, especially if we are a bit scared to go on our own. Sometimes the helper does not respond the way we hope. We might need to try again with someone else. However, it is important to remember that some problems can grow bigger if we don't seek help.
11. Inform students:

    In our next lesson, we will think about who we help and who we trust to help us. Remember, you can come and tell me if you or someone else has a problem, and you can also tell other teachers, for example, wellbeing staff.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

12. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support or to let you know they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
13. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Conclude the activity by inviting students to review the learning intentions. Ask, 'Has the activity helped you to think of ways to seek help from an adult when someone is sick or hurt, or when something unsafe is happening? Has the activity helped you to feel that you can ask for help if you need to? How has it helped you to do this?'

Coaching point

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

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Help-seeking scenarios

Ask a teacher to help.

Someone has fallen off the slide and hurt themselves.

Ask a teacher to help.

Someone is crying because they don't have any lunch.

Ask a grandparent to help.

You are too scared to fall asleep by yourself in their spare bedroom.

Ask a parent to help.

You believe your friend is being bullied at school.

Ask a teacher to help.

You feel sick in the tummy.

Ask a teacher to help.

You don't know how to do the task.

Add scenarios to address the situations that students have suggested.

Topic 06

Activity 4: Who can I ask for help?

Learning intentions

- Students will list some people they can go to for help.

Equipment

- The 'Helping hands' worksheet

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   It is important to know who we can ask for help. Today we are going to think about people at home and at school that we know we could go to for help. How do you feel about what we will learn? If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm, for example, taking some deep breaths. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or at home, and that is also okay.
2. Draw 2 hands on the board. Explain that students will use 5 of their fingers, which are always with them, to write a list to remind them that they have people they can trust and talk to when they feel upset or sad. The fingers on their other hand can remind them that they also help many other people.
3. Remind students of any help-seeking pathways in the school.
4. Distribute the 'helping hands' worksheet. Explain that the people they talk to can be someone they trust from home like a relative or carer, a teacher, friend or other person from school, or friends from other places. It is good if there are some adults to help, as some problems are too big for children.
5. Ask students to write down on one hand the names of people they can go and talk to when they need help; a name on each finger and one name on the thumb. Encourage them to include at least one adult from school. Move around the class to check how students are managing this activity. Provide discreet help for students who are finding it difficult to think of 5 people they could go to for help, for example, by writing the names of relevant school staff on the board. Follow up with students who prompt concern because they do not choose to include any adults as helpers.
6. Students can also complete a helping hand for those people who they help sometimes. Emphasise that they can be both help seekers and help givers. Encourage them to name at least one person from school.
7. Gather students in a circle with their completed 'helping hands' worksheet. Ask them to introduce one person they could go to for help and one person they are able to help.
8. Encourage students to share their helping hands at home, and to ask their parents or carers if there are any other names they could add.
9. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
10. Provide a fun, energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Conclude the activity by inviting students to review the learning intention. Has the activity helped them to name people in their lives who they can go to for help if they have a problem?

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

Reflecting on everyday practice

- Who are the people you could turn to for help when needed?
- How do you encourage students to seek and provide assistance in the classroom?

Extension activities

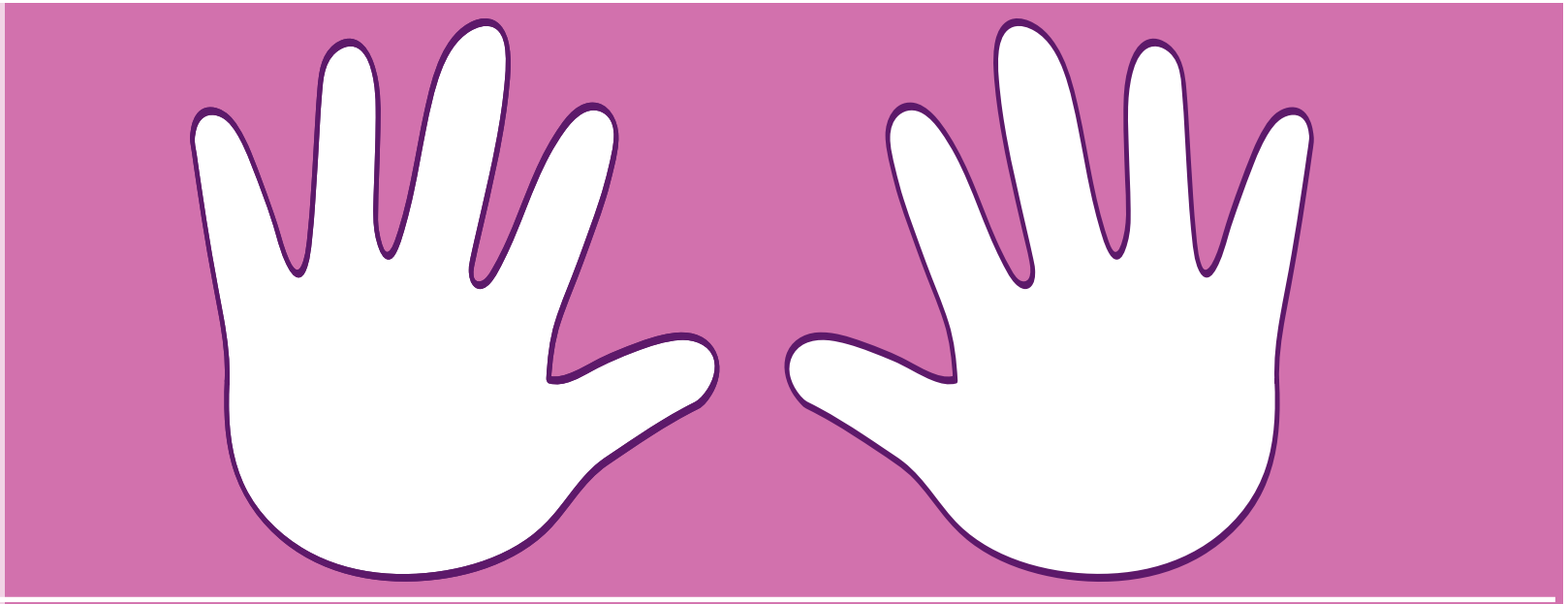
- Ask students to invent some advice to guide peers about when to manage something by themselves and when to ask for help. Suggestions could include, if it involves more than one person, if it lasts too long, if it won't go away no matter what you try, if it causes pain or suffering, or if it is a lasting breach of someone's rights – you should ask for help!
- Students can write a story or create a short performance for younger children that models how a character might go about help-seeking. This character should persist in their helpseeking until they find the right kind of help.
- Students can write a story in which peers play a key role in supporting a friend to get the help that they need.

Talking further

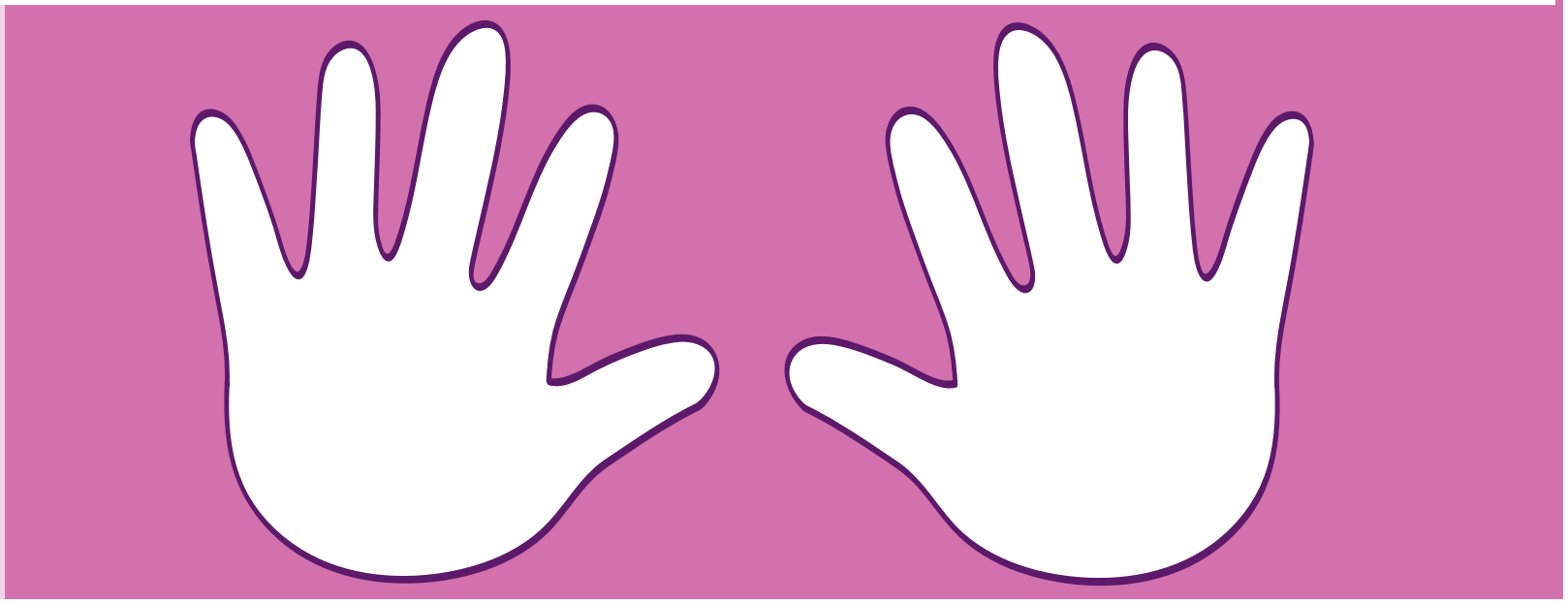
- Encourage students to share their 'helping hands' work with those they included as part of their 5 trusted people.
- Students could ask their family members who they talk to when they want help for different things.
- Encourage students to ask parents or carers to tell them about a time that someone in their life provided help for them, or a time when they helped someone else.
- Suggest that some students might like to write a letter or picture of thanks for the help they have received from their parents or carers.

HELPING HANDS
Worksheet

People I can go to for help:



People I can help:



Topic 07

Gender norms and stereotypes

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- reflect on their identity via a focus on their likes, dislikes and strengths
- develop an awareness of positive and negative gender norms
- challenge negative gender norms
- develop an appreciation of difference.

Content Advice

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

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

Studies show that school-based social and emotional learning, respectful relationships education and other violence prevention initiatives can make a real difference, producing lasting change in attitudes and behaviours in students [23, 41-43]. Providing comprehensive classroom programs to all students is a key part of a whole-of-school approach to preventing gender-based violence and promoting positive relationships. [44] Research shows that children become aware of gender at an early age, are well aware of gender norms, and are making efforts to fit within gendered expectations by the time they are in kindergarten [45]. As young children learn about gender, they may also begin to enact sexist values or stereotypical beliefs and attitudes [45-47]. They may, for example, insist that some games are for boys and others are for girls, and actively reject peers of a different gender from certain games. This means that it is important to begin building positive gender relationships within these early years. Classroom activities can be used to help children to challenge stereotypes, to value and show respect for diversity and difference, and to learn how to apply respectful and inclusive attitudes within positive gender relationships.

An inclusive or 'gender-complex' approach can be used to challenge the oppression and disadvantage that arise from negative gender norms and in response to the gender binary.[48] In the past, it was common for educators to employ 'gender stereotypical' approaches that replicated the gender binary and associated expectations by assigning different roles and opportunities to girls and boys. As gender equality movements drew attention to the importance of equal opportunities for girls and boys, it was not uncommon for teachers to seek a 'genderfree' or 'gender-blind' approach, whereby the teacher sought to be fair by ignoring gender. However, with this approach, dominant patterns tended to persist because steps were not taken to recognise and address inequality or positions of relative privilege or disadvantage. Subsequently, 'gender-sensitive' approaches evolved. Within a gender-sensitive approach, teachers fashion differential strategies to counteract inequity. However, this approach tends to operate within a gender binary and may fail to recognise diversity of gender and sexuality. This can lead to the continuation of experiences of exclusion, devaluing or discrimination towards those who do not fit within the dominant binary identities or gender-conforming norms. Within a 'gender-complex' approach, a teacher employs strategies from a gender-sensitive approach but becomes additionally alert to the ways that heteronormative and binary 'boy–girl' and 'man–woman' classifications can work to exclude or stigmatise those who do not fit neatly within these membership categories. To interrupt this trend, they intentionally use inclusive approaches that offer recognition and normalisation of, and respect for, all genders including non-binary gender identities and those who do not identify with the gender assigned them at birth.[48]

Topic 07

Activity 1: Identity – comparing personal preferences

Informed by the evidence base

Children become aware from an early age that characteristics like gender, language and differences in ability are connected with privilege and power. They learn by observing the world around them, and by absorbing the spoken and unspoken messages about the patterns that they observe.[49] As they become aware of gendered patterns of behaviour, and attempt to fit within the categories that they perceive themselves as belonging to, they can begin to limit their options, and this can affect the way they interact with peers.[49, 50] The early school years are a critical time to challenge stereotypes based on gender and other differences. It is useful to teach students how to acknowledge, explore and celebrate diverse identities. This helps them realise that their likes and dislikes do not have to be limited by their gender or any other characteristics, and that their preferences and interests can change and evolve over time.

Research shows that many people are aware of both their gender identity and their sexuality from an early age. Research conducted in Australia finds that half of young people who are same-sex attracted will know before age 12 [51]. Gender-diverse young people are also likely to know from a young age that their gender is different from what has been presumed for them, even though they may not communicate this to others until late adolescence or adulthood.[52] 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.[52] Additionally, children who have family members who identify as of diverse gender or sexuality can also find it particularly distressing when they witness sexist, homophobic or transphobic behaviour from their peers. Approaches to addressing gender-based violence should therefore advance the importance of treating all people with respect and promoting gender equality across all genders.

Learning intentions

- Students will identify some of the different things that they enjoy doing.
- Students will compare ways their preferences may be similar to or different from those of their peers.
- Students will identify that it is important to have a variety of skills and strengths to develop resilience, have fun and learn.
- Students identify that knowing about our own and other people's interests and preferences can improve the way we work and play together.

Equipment

- Room to move
- A large poster or section on the whiteboard labelled 'Things people in our class like to do' (also to be used in Activity 2)
- Pencils or felt pens

Part 1: The Fruit Salad Game for a focus on similarities and differences

Method

1. Explain that this game will help people to mix and sit with different people. State that it is important to be able to mix with anyone in this group. Everyone is important and valued regardless of differences between people.
2. Seat participants on chairs arranged in a circle. Name each person a 'strawberry', 'apple' or 'banana'. Ask them to remember their category. Point out that they all also belong to the category 'fruit salad'.
3. The leader stands in the centre of the circle. They do not have a chair. When they call out the name of one of the fruits, all players in that category must move to a different chair. For example, on the call of 'Banana!' all 'bananas' must leave their chairs and find a different chair. At this time the leader will also 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 'fruit salad' is called, then all the players must find a new chair.
4. Play a few rounds of the game. By this time participants will be seated in a mixed arrangement.

5. Stop the game and retain the seating arrangement – students should be randomly allocated because of playing the 'fruit salad' round. In a circle session, build on the key ideas from the game, leading students to reflect on the skills they used to play the game. Use the game to point out that we can be different, but also have things in common. Bananas, apples and strawberries are very different from one another, but they all belong together in the category of fruits. We are all people of equal value, even though we are different.

Part 2: Exploring individual preferences

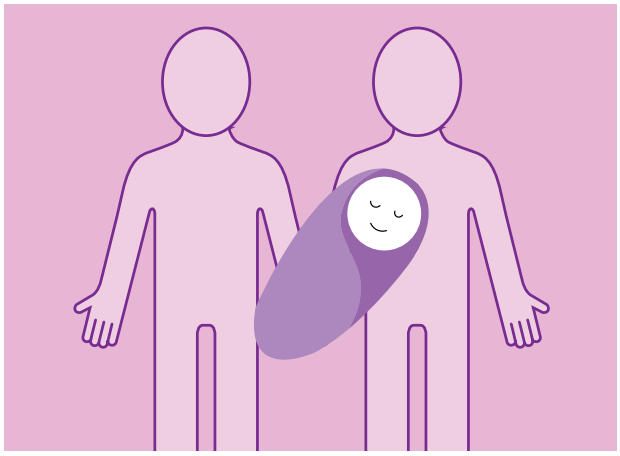
Method

1. Explain that students are going to do some research about students' similarities and differences. Ask students to think for a moment about some of their favourite games and activities. Invite them to work with a person sitting next to them, using the think–pair–share method to swap information with their partner about some of their favourite games and activities.
2. Invite students to report back on the similarities and differences that they found when they talked with their partner. Were there things they both liked? Did they also have some different favourites?
3. Record some of the favourite activities on a collective poster and label it, 'Things people in our class like to do'. During the sharing time, go around the circle inviting individual students to add their preferences. Record their contributions on the poster. (This information will be used again in Activity 2.)
4. Review the collection and highlight, 'We found out that there are similarities and differences between students. People can have some things in common, but they are not the same in every way. For example, Chung likes to play with Lego, just like Prue, so they have this similarity. Chung also likes to cook and so does Max. However, Max also likes going to the shops, but Chung does not like this, so there is a difference as well as a similarity for Chung and Simon.'
5. Review the collection of offerings on the poster again. Model the possibility that people can like several activities that are very different in nature. Share something about yourself, for example, that you love to play football, dance, cook, read, do woodwork or sew. Share some examples that disrupt common gender stereotypes. Remind students that people can also develop more and more interests as they grow older.
6. Identify that students have shown that people can enjoy variety of activities. Ask for some suggestions why it might be a good thing to be able to enjoy a lot of different sorts of activities and games.
7. Make observations about and celebrate the diversity of preferred play activities within the group. Lead students to think about gender and play. Ask, 'Can people enjoy doing all these things, regardless of their gender? Is there anything on our list that people can't do just because of their gender?'
8. Emphasise that it is important to respect and enjoy the individual differences and interests of classmates. What we like to do does not depend on our gender. Rather, we are all allowed to have our own individual interests. We can also gather new interests as we get older and develop new preferences and abilities.
9. Explain to students that they will play a game where they get to use some of their personal character strengths. Introduce the Mind the Baby relay.

Part 3: The Mind the Baby Relay

Method

1. Organise 2 or 3 teams. In each team the players form pairs. Each pair stands side by side. They must walk as a pair.
2. Gather the pairs one behind the other so the teams are ready for their relay race. Down the other end of the room place a chair for the players to run around.



3. Give the first pair in line for each team a cloth bundle to carry. This bundle is the 'baby' that the pair must carry. They will travel across the room, around the chair and back, and then pass the baby to the next pair in their team. The baby must be kept safe (not dropped) and must be always held by both parties in the partnership.
4. The winning team is the one that has their last players return first with the baby.
5. After the game, settle the class to discuss the activity. Useful questions include:
    - 'What did you have to do to make sure you did not drop the baby?'
    - 'What skills were you using to make sure that your 'baby' was carefully looked after by everyone who was a carer, or everyone who carried it?'
    - 'In real life, what skills do people use to share the care of babies or smaller children?'
    - 'In real life, people must be both strong and gentle when they look after babies. What do they do that is gentle? What do they do that uses their strengths?'
    - 'In real life, does it have to be a father and a mother who work together to look after a baby, or can other combinations of people do this?' Seek examples.
    - 'Emphasise that in real life, parents and carers try hard to look after children. Families come in different sizes, and children can have several different carers of different genders, who are all helping to look after them.'

Review

Ask students to comment on how well they think they have done in accomplishing the learning intentions. Ask, 'Were you able to identify some of the different things that you enjoy doing? How? Did you find out the ways that your preferences were similar to or different from those of your classmates?' Seek some examples. Ask, 'Did you have a chance to notice that games and interests and toys are not just for one gender, and that people can have the interests that are right for them?'

Coaching point

Diversity is delightful. Throughout each stage of the activity, make connections with the key point that diversity is to be appreciated and respected. Teach the use of inclusive language to model ways to show respect for diversity and difference. Reinforce that it is important to be able to enjoy a variety of interests, regardless of our gender, and to enjoy the ways that our friends can be different as well as similar to us. Provide constant modelling to set the scene for recognition and appreciation of diversity. This can help to interrupt gender stereotypes. Refer to the previous activity and include students' examples when discussing stories. Select literature to read to the class that interrupts gender stereotypes, and find authentic ways to model this yourself. Additionally, include the idea that people can change their minds about what they like to do. For example, they can play different things on different days. As we grow and change our interests and preferences can change.

Topic 07

Activity 2: Labels are for jars, not for people

Informed by the evidence base

Gender norms influence beliefs about emotional experience and self-expression.[49] Dominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity can limit the possibilities that children see for themselves and others, influencing their behaviour and relationships, as well as their future aspirations. For example, gender beliefs related to masculinity may include the denial of vulnerability or weakness, physical or emotional control, physical dominance and the appearance of being strong, and tolerance of displays of aggressive behaviour. Gender norms related to femininity and pressures to meet expected beauty standards can lead to augmented rates of body image distress.[53] 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.

Learning intentions

- Students will describe what labels are used for.
- Students will identify that it is not helpful to apply labels to people.

Equipment

- Containers with labels (for example, jam and vegemite jars, packets of cereal and so on)
- Labels for 'boy', 'girl' and 'gender diverse'
- 'Things people in our class like to do' brainstorm sheet from previous activity

Method

1. Provide some containers with labels. Ask students to examine the containers and explain what a label is used for. A response might be that labels are used to describe what is in a container.
2. Display the labels, 'boy, 'girl' and 'gender diverse'.
3. Ask if these labels do the same thing as the labels on the jars or boxes. Ask, 'Do they really tell you much about a person?' Elicit or explain that, unlike the container or jar labels, these labels do not tell us what is inside the person. They do not tell us what a person likes to do, play or eat, or what they want to do when they grow up. So, these are not very helpful labels.
4. Return to some of the data generated in the activity where students shared their favourite games and activities. Show how this extra information would need to be added to the labels to help us understand who each of these people are. For example, some extra information about 'Gemma' is that she likes camping, riding her bike, dancing and books about monsters. One day she wants to travel around the world. Ask students whether the label 'girl' tells us all of this. Point out that even if someone knows Gemma quite well, she can still surprise them.
5. Explain that if we rely on labels to help us understand people we can get into some problems. For example, it is not useful if we think the label 'boy' tells us that all boys should be the same and should all like the same things. Boys can choose. Boys are allowed to be different from each other. It is not useful if we think the label 'girl' tells us that all girls should be the same and should like all the same things. Girls can choose. Girls are allowed to be different from each other. It is not useful if we think the label 'gender diverse' tells us that all gender-diverse people should be the same and should like all the same things. They can choose. People are allowed to be different from each other.
6. Ask if anyone has ever heard people say things like 'That's a girl's colour, not a boy's colour', 'girls can't' or 'boys can't', 'You can't do that because you are a boy' or 'That is a "girl" thing to do.' Ask students to share.
7. Point out that when people say things like this, they are using the label 'boy' or 'girl' in a way that is not useful. If this happens, it's important to know that students can speak back and respectfully disagree. Being told that a certain game is just for girls or just for boys can be like being made to wear shoes that are too small for you. It can squash you in and stop you from being free to enjoy life.

8. Explain that you are going to give students a chance to practise being 'gender fair'. This means making it fair for people to choose what is right for them, regardless of their gender. This means they can speak back or respectfully disagree if someone is using gender labels to tell them what they should or should not like to play or do. They will work together to think of what someone can say if this happens to them.
9. Lead a couple of worked examples. Present the following scenarios.

   Scenario A

   Some boys would not let Hazel play. They said to her, 'Girls don't play football.' What could she say? Ask students to suggest ways that Hazel could speak back to this. Students may suggest things like, 'Lots of girls play football', 'I watch women's football on TV' or 'I play football with my mum.'

   Scenario B

   Tom's little sister aged 4 said, 'Boys don't do ballet.' But Tom loves to dance. What could he say? Use a similar model to gather some possible responses. Students might use evidence or examples, state their own preferences, or simply challenge the truth of the statement. Remind students that the intention is not to argue with or be mean to the younger child. Explain that they may need to use a gentle and more helpful voice to assist the younger child to learn from them.

   Option: Invite some students to demonstrate via role-play what some of the advice might sound like or look like in action. Or invite students to work in pairs or trios to try out what some of the advice might sound like or look like in action.

Review

As you review the learning intentions, explain that students have worked on an important idea in the activity, which is that we must be careful about thinking that the labels 'boy', 'girl' or 'gender diverse' can be used to tell people what they should or shouldn't be interested in choosing to do, learn or play. Everyone is a little bit similar and a little bit different, and our differences are important. We don't have to be the same as each other. We can enjoy the ways that people are different. We can let our friends have their own interests and favourite activities. Ask, 'How did the activity help you to understand that it is not helpful to put labels on people?'

Coaching point

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

To reinforce the understanding that girls, boys, men, women and gender-diverse people can choose to do or be anything that they would like regardless of their gender, collect images and stories of people in the community, for example, women's sports teams, women who are firefighters or doctors, trans and gender-diverse personalities or professionals, men who are childcare workers, receptionists, family carers and so on. Refer to these when relevant during the school day.

Topic 07

Activity 3: What is fair play?

Informed by the evidence base

Gender norms can influence what children presume to be permissible within their play. [54] For example, boys can be socialised to presume that forms of physical violence are permissible to exhibit strength and prowess in play. Sometimes adults are more inclined to excuse violence perpetrated by boys on other boys, justifying it as male bonding, rather than seeing it as a mechanism for dominance. Sometimes adults are more inclined to dismiss the hurtful nature of verbal forms of violence perpetrated by girls on other girls, dismissing it as gossiping. Classroom activities can question and also challenge these gender norms around the acceptability of various forms of verbal and physical aggression in play. This in turn can help to create new possibilities for more positive peer relationships.

Learning intentions

- Students will describe how the rules of the game help people to play in a fair way.
- Students will explain how being unfair can lead to people getting hurt or upset.

Equipment

- Room to move
- Equipment required for teacher-selected games

Method

1. Engage with constructing a shared understanding of what is meant by the word 'fair'. Ask students to explain what 'being fair' means. Encourage them to give examples of being fair and unfair. Explain, 'Being fair is when we treat people with equal respect. We include them. We don't treat some people badly. We follow the rules. We share turns and resources. We don't treat some as favourites and others as if they are not important.'
2. Explain, 'We will now play some games to help us talk more about what it means to be fair.' Divide students into mixed-gender groups. Assign each group to a game that needs to be played in a small group to be fun. Examples are board games, charades, or improvised throwing (non-ball) games, like throwing a soft toy into a large basket or a box held by the other players.
3. Invite students to report back on their game. Ask, 'How do the rules help us to enjoy this game?' Elicit how the rules of the game helped to enable people to have turns and to know what to do, and what not to do.
4. Ask, 'What did you have to do to make that game work well for everyone, and not end in a fight?' Elicit how they had to cooperate in their game, how they worked with and encouraged each other during the game, how they kept rules about taking turns or going out, and how they sometimes gave people an extra chance to make things more equal if they had different abilities or less expertise in playing that game.
5. Ask, 'What sorts of actions in a game can lead to arguments?' Examples include that people don't always play in a fair and friendly way, sometimes they are mean or rough when they play, or they exclude others, and sometimes they sulk or cheat. Point out that this can lead to fights, tears or people feeling left out.
6. Ask, 'Should everyone be equally expected to play by the rules, regardless of their gender?' Elicit the idea that fairness means that everyone should be equally expected to refrain from violence when playing together. Point out that regardless of gender, everyone is expected to play in a fair and friendly way. This means that no one gender should take more than their fair share of the play equipment or space in the schoolyard. It means that violence and mean talk is not okay. It is not okay because it is not respectful. It is not okay because it is not fair.

Review

Invite students to review the learning intentions. Were they able to identify that unfair play can lead to arguments and to people getting hurt or upset? Were they able to identify that it is equally important for all people to play in a fair and friendly manner, regardless of any gender mix?

Topic 07

Activity 4: Ways to be gender fair

Informed by the evidence base

Researchers who work in the area of gender and identity point to the way certain discriminatory practices can become invisible, or just taken for granted as a 'natural' way for things to be. For change to happen, people must first be aware of inequity, agree that it is neither 'natural' nor acceptable, and begin to imagine what a fairer world would look like [47, 55]. The focus on gender equality is about more than freedom from harassment and violence. It is also about having the opportunity and encouragement for everyone, regardless of gender, to participate fully and safely in life. Research demonstrates that those with rights-affirming attitudes are less likely to engage in gender-based violence and that belief in the equality of men and women is protective against uptake of violence-endorsing attitudes and practices.[56, 57] People with awareness of the gendered nature of violence are more likely to recognise when and how to support victims and how to encourage action to prevent violence [58].

Learning intentions

- Students will practise ways to be gender fair.
- Students will practise things people can say if someone tells them they can't do something just because of their gender.

Equipment

- 'Be gender fair' scenarios

Method

1. Refresh the definitions for 'fairness' that students created in the prior activity and their understanding of 'respect', developed in Topic 2, Activities 4 and 5.
2. Explain that you are going to give students more chances to practise being 'gender fair'. This means making it fair for people to choose what is right for them, regardless of their gender. One way to be gender fair is to speak back or respectfully disagree if someone is using gender labels to tell us what we should or should not like to play or do. Remind them that they explored doing this with the 'Hazel' and 'Tom' scenarios in Activity 2. This time, they will work together to think of what they can say if someone is 'gender-unfair' to them. Model some key strategies they could use with the following scenario: Indi was digging in the garden when her brother came up and took the spade from her. He said, 'I will do it. Girls aren't strong enough to dig.'

   Students could suggest how Indi could respond in various ways:

   - use evidence or examples – 'Grandma digs in her garden and so can I.'
   - state their own preferences – 'Thanks, but I don't need you to do it. I'm happy to keep digging.'
   - challenge the truth of the statement – 'That's not true. Look at what I've dug. Girls have muscles too. We can dig.'
3. Organise for students to work in small groups or pairs. Allocate a scenario to each group and provide time for them to think of some possible ways to speak back. Invite groups to report back with their ideas. As they do so, capture and provide positive feedback on some of the key strategies they have used.
4. Invite students to return to their working groups to prepare a short role-play that demonstrates what some of the advice might sound like or look like in action.

5. Once they have had time to prepare, arrange for students to show their role-plays. Ask those watching to watch in the same way that a coach does when they watch their team play. They watch to see all the things they do well, and also to see if there is anything they can do to improve a bit. Invite some positive appraisal and suggestions after the examples have been shown. Model ways to do this. For example, say 'One thing I found helpful in that example was they disagreed in a polite way. That showed respect' or 'I thought it was really effective when you gave some real examples of fathers who do look after babies.'

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

6. Inform students that in the next lesson we will move on to the topic of positive gender relations. Activity 1 in Topic 8 talks about 'What is violence?' If any part of this lesson worries you , remember to try a coping strategy that might help you to stay calm, for example, taking some deep breaths. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get support.
7. Add further detail about how this will be managed in the school or continue with the sample options provided here. Say, for example, 'If this topic is too much for you at this time, you can do one of our quiet activities over here (for example, mindfulness colouring or selection of books to read). You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay.'
8. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.

Review

As you review the learning intentions, explain that students have worked on an important idea today – the idea is that we can be gender fair. That means we treat everyone in a nice, fair, respectful and equal way, whether they are the same gender as us or not. This means we also encourage them to follow their interests. We don't tell them they can't do something just because of their gender.

Invite students to say how well they think they have done in accomplishing the learning intentions. Ask, 'How did you practise ways to be gender fair? What kinds of things did you practise for situations where people say you can't do certain things because of your gender?'

Coaching point

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

Helping scenarios

Scenario 1

When Leo hurt himself his babysitter said, 'Big boys don't cry.'

What might other people say?

Scenario 2

Alinta said she would be a firefighter when she grew up. Her little brother said, 'Girls can't be firefighters.'

What could she say?

Scenario 3

A Grade 2 child said, 'Men can't be nurses.'

What could other children say?

Scenario 4

A little cousin said, 'Girls should play with dolls and boys should play with monsters.'

What could their older cousins say?

Scenario 5

A 3-year-old child said, 'Dads can't look after babies.'

What could other children say?

Scenario 6

Jamal's little cousin came home from playgroup and said, 'You can't wear that. Pink is for girls and blue is for boys.'

What could Jamal say?

Scenario 7

When some students went to get some play equipment, Matt said the girls should take the skipping ropes because the balls were just for boys. But the girls also wanted to play ball.

What could the girls say?

Scenario 8

When Jasdeep fell over and hurt himself, some bigger boys told him not to cry. They said, 'Big boys don't cry.' Jasdeep knew that it was okay for anybody to cry if they hurt themselves.

What could Jasdeep say?

Scenario 9

Some girls were playing a game of fairies and elves. Ben wanted to play, but the girls said, 'Only girls can pretend to be fairies, so you can't play.'

What could Ben say?

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

Teacher note

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

Reflecting on everyday practice

- How do your own interests, skills and life experiences influence how you respond to gender norms?
- How do you work towards gender equity and inclusion across the curriculum, in class routines and across the school day?
- Does your school's anti-bullying or diversity policy specifically address harassment or discrimination based on sexuality, gender identity or intersex status?

Extension activities

- Select a range of stories to read with the class that interrupt gender stereotypes. Draw attention to the way that the characters choose actions that are a good fit with their interests and note where they used their strengths in positive ways or learnt from their mistakes.

Talking further

- Work with students to construct a class newsletter that sums up the key learning and ideas in this topic. Students can take this home to share with parents or carers.
- Encourage students to invite parents, carers, siblings and older buddies into the classroom to show and tell what they have been learning about in this topic.

Topic 08 Postivie gender relations

Aims

Activities within this topic area will assist students to:

- develop an understanding of gender-based violence as involving unfair and hurtful behaviours based on ideas about what it means to be a boy, girl or gender-diverse person
- identify how gender-based violence can include things that people say (verbal), things that they do to others people' bodies or possessions (physical), or things that affect how safe or welcome other people feel, for example, ignoring them, leaving them out or laughing at them (psychological)
- examine the effects of physical, verbal and psychological forms of gender-based violence
- identify and practise respectful and gender-friendly behaviours
- develop and practise assertive and help-seeking strategies to protect themselves when they feel unsafe in situations involving gender-based violence.

Content Advice

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

The following icons indicate the need for content advice:

Provide content advice prior to an activity / lesson

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity / lesson

Informed by the evidence base

Patterns of gender-based violence in society affect children and young people. Family violence includes a range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur in families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. Family violence is often witnessed by the children who live in the household.[59] Children are victims of family violence when they hear, witness or are exposed to the effects of family violence on a family member as well as when the violence is directed towards them. In Australia, domestic, family and sexual violence is found across all cultures, ages and socio-economic groups, but the majority of those who experience these forms of violence are women.[60] Children who witness family violence are negatively affected. They are also more likely to be affected by violence as adults – either as victims of partner violence or as perpetrators of violence against children or partners. Some research shows that boys who witness their father use violence against their mother are up to 5 times more likely to use violence against their own partner when they grow up.[61, 62]

Research highlights that one of the most consistent predictors of the perpetration of violence against women at an individual level is a traditional view about gender roles and relationships.[57] A body of research has demonstrated that cultural understandings of 'masculinities' and 'femininities' operate as normative discourses (or 'scripts') that shape people's identities, expectations and behaviours, regardless of their gender or sexuality. These discourses and norms intersect with race, class, age and other lines of identity and difference to shape what people presume to be desirable and permissible in relation to their social interactions [63, 64].[65-68]

Some boys and men can become defensive in response to initiatives addressing prevention of gender-based violence. They may feel that the focus on the violence perpetrated by some men is an attack on men in general, and hence 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.[69] A combination of relevant and inclusive scenarios and information can help to build recognition of the effects of violence on targets and on witnesses.

Studies show that school-based social and emotional learning, violence prevention and respectful relationships initiatives can make a real difference, producing lasting change in attitudes and behaviours in students [23, 41-43]. In effective respectful relationships programs, children and young people learn about the ways that power relations inform gender relationships. They learn how to translate a belief in respect for others into respectful communicative practices. This requires a focus on skills as well as attitudes. Studies show that effective programs employ participatory and interactive pedagogy. Participatory pedagogies stimulate the critical thinking necessary to interrogate social norms and the skills development needed to engage in a positive way with others.[70]

High rates of victimisation and associated trauma mean that in any class there will likely be students who have been affected by family violence or sexual abuse. In any school, there will also be a proportion of staff affected. Some of those affected may find the focus on this material to be particularly sensitive. They may also be without established means of support, as many people do not disclose that they have suffered abuse or sexual violence in childhood or beyond.[71] 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.[72] 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.[72]

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, establishing positive and caring relationships, understanding the effects of trauma, and using proactive approaches to provide wellbeing support.[73] 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 a description of options for levels of participation, and information about how to access support within and beyond the school.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

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

Reinforce the importance of respectful conversations. Revisit the class agreements as appropriate. See guidance in the learning activities provided in 'Introductory activities'.

Sample script for content advice for Topic 8

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

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

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

Sometimes, when we hear a story about someone being unsafe or hurt, it might make us feel a bit wobbly inside. Before we start each lesson, I will let you know if there will be scenarios about children who have been hurt, left out or called mean names. If you find that the lessons make you feel upset or wobbly, your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If a topic is not good for you at any time, you can do one of our quiet activities, or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else, here at school or at home, and that is also okay.

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

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.

Topic 08

Activity 1: What is violence? What is gender-based violence?

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to work with children from an early age to consider the difference between fair and friendly play and play that is violent or 'too rough'. This sets the scene for understanding that violence is never acceptable, and definitely not as a mode of resolving a relationship problem.[44, 74] Some gender norms encourage acceptance of higher levels of violence when perpetrated by boys or on boys, dismissing violent acts as an inevitable sign that 'boys will be boys'. Violence data indicates that many boys are the victims of violence perpetrated by other boys. It is important to set the same nonviolent standards for all genders. It is also important to establish the expectation that all children can learn the self-control needed to ensure that they do not resort to violence to get their own way or to deal with their frustration.

Studies show that school-based social and emotional learning, respectful relationships education and other violence prevention initiatives can make a real difference, producing lasting change in attitudes and behaviours in students [23, 41-43]. In effective programs, students learn how to translate a belief in respect for others into respectful communicative practices. This requires a focus on skills as well as attitudes. Studies show that effective programs employ participatory and interactive pedagogy. Participatory pedagogies stimulate the critical thinking necessary to interrogate social norms and to develop the social skills needed in daily life.[70]

High rates of victimisation and associated trauma mean that in any class there will likely be students who have been affected by family violence or sexual abuse. In any school, there will also be a proportion of staff affected. Some of those affected may find the focus on this material particularly sensitive. They may also be without established means of support, as many people do not disclose that they have suffered abuse or sexual violence in childhood or beyond.[71] 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.[72] Given this likelihood, is 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.[72]

Learning intentions

- Students will name different types of violence, including hurting people's feelings, hurting people's bodies or damaging their possessions on purpose.
- Students will name some emotions people can have when they see violence or when it happens to them.
- Students will name some bodily sensations people can feel when they see violence or when it happens to them.
- Students will name some kinds of violence that are also gender-unfair..

Equipment

- Copy of scenarios to be used
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Coaching point

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

1. Inform students of the following, ahead of time, so you have time to sort through any concern from students prior to the lesson commencing.

   Today we will be talking about violence, including when people say mean things to others or try to hurt them. We will also work out how people can help when this happens. If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy, for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If this topic is not good for you today, you can do one of our quiet activities, or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Ask students what they think the word 'violence' means. Invite some examples. As they provide examples, invite students to also name some behaviours or actions that can be used to deliberately be mean to people in a way that hurts their feelings, even if it does not hurt their body.

3. Explain that the word 'violence' is used to talk about ways that people hurt others on purpose. People can hurt the bodies of other people by hitting, kicking, biting, pushing or throwing things. People can hurt other people's feelings by saying mean things, teasing, name-calling or yelling at them. They can also hurt people's feelings by ignoring them or leaving them out. All these different kinds of actions are hurtful for people. That is why we call them types of violence. Explain that sometimes people use gender labels in a mean or violent way. This is called gender-based violence.

4. Tell the class that they will use some scenarios to notice what kinds of violence are happening. When they hear the scenario, they will work together to name the kinds of violence being used. They will also talk about how this might affect the person who has had the violence done to them.

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 them 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. Lead the class through some worked examples. Read the following scenario and use the questions to guide student response. Scenario 1 provides a focus on gender-based violence perpetrated by a boy to a girl.

Scenario 1

Amira was playing on the swing. Lucas yelled to her to get off because he wanted a turn. He grabbed the swing and stood over Amira yelling, 'Girls have to get off or I will push them off!'

Questions

What is Lucas doing that is violent?

How might this make Amira feel? What bodily sensations? What emotions?

What could other people say to Lucas to help him understand how his actions have caused harm?

Where can you see some gender-unfair behaviour here? Is someone using gender labels in a mean or unfair way?

Would this situation also be gender-unfair if it was Lucas on the swing, and Amira told him 'Boys have to get off or I will push them off'?

6. As you lead students through the questions, ensure that they can name the offending behaviours (verbs) that constitute forms of violence. Ensure they describe the behaviour and not the person. For example, not 'He is mean' or 'He is a bully.' Rather, 'He grabbed', 'He yelled' or 'He threatened'. To respond to the question about gender, show that the threat and action are both because Amira is a girl. Reinforce that it is not okay to grab, push or yell at people to get what you want, or to make up unfair rules about what children of different genders can play. Invite students to describe a respectful and fair way to negotiate having a turn on the play equipment. The following lesson will provide opportunity to rehearse these behaviours in role-plays.

Coaching point

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

7. Present Scenario 2, which has a focus on a boy subjecting another boy to a form of genderbased violence. Use a similar process to guide the discussion.

Scenario 2

While Nik was playing kick-to-kick football with Eddy, Waheed and Dino, he fell and grazed his knee. It began to bleed. Nik began to cry. Dino laughed and pointed at him, saying, 'Look at the sooky baby! Only girls cry! So, you're a girl!' What is Dino doing that is violent?

How might Nik feel in terms of bodily sensations and emotions?

What could other people say to Dino to help him understand how his actions have caused harm?

Where can you see some gender-unfair behaviour here? Is someone using gender labels in a mean or unfair way?

Work with students to name the offending actions, for example, laughing at someone in a mean way, teasing, making fun of someone or name-calling. Reinforce that it is not okay to put people down, make fun of them, call them mean names or laugh at them in a mean way. These are kinds of violence. Also, it is not okay for people in one gender group to use unfair gender labels on other members of their gender group – like boys making fun of boys who cry, or girls making fun of girls for their appearance. People of all genders are all allowed to cry, especially when they have been hurt, and to choose and express their interests. Invite students to describe a respectful and fair way to respond if a classmate hurts themselves and starts crying.

8. Present Scenario 3, which has a focus on gender-based violence perpetrated by a girl on a boy.

Scenario 3

Dembe sat at the table to eat lunch. He sat at the table where Poppy, Mia and Imani were sitting. Poppy said, 'Boys don't sit at our table. Boys have germs. Go away!' She started swinging her legs and kicking Dembe under the table.

What is Poppy is doing that is violent?

How might Dembe feel in terms of bodily sensations and emotions?

What could other people say to Poppy to help her understand how her actions have caused harm?

Where can you see some gender-unfair behaviour here? Is someone using gender labels in a mean or unfair way?

Again, work with students to name the offending actions for example, name-calling, kicking and excluding people, including because of a gender membership category. Reinforce that it is not okay to call people mean names, kick them or push them out of a group, just because they are a different gender from you. People of all genders are all allowed to mix, work and play together. Invite students to describe a respectful and fair way to respond if someone of a different gender wants to come and eat lunch with you.

9. Present Scenario 4, which has a focus on sexualised forms of gender-based violence perpetrated by boys upon girls.

Scenario 4

Effie was playing with her friends at lunchtime. Theo and Aldo from the Grade 4 class ran up to Effie and her friends and started looking up their clothes and singing, 'We can see your undies, we can see your undies!'

What is the violence that Theo and Aldo are doing?

How might Effie feel in terms of bodily sensations and emotions?

What could other people say to Theo and Aldo to help them understand how their actions have caused harm?

Where can you see some gender-unfair behaviour here? Is someone using gender labels in a mean or unfair way?

Would this situation also be gender-unfair if it was swapped around, and it was girls looking up the boys' clothes to see their undies?

Work with students to name the offending actions, for example, lifting people's dresses, trying to look at their underwear, teasing them or commenting on more private parts of their body. Point out that it is not okay to try to touch or to look at people's private parts by pulling their clothes aside. Everybody has the right to keep some parts of their body private.

Coaching point

What respect looks like. A focus on behaviours or on what people can do to show respect can be more empowering than a focus on qualities, for example, 'I wait my turn' signals more clearly what is expected than 'I am patient'. It is important to be able to name the behaviours that constitute disrespect, and those that are respectful. This specificity helps peers and teachers to address in an educative way comments like 'I was only joking.' Such comments work to erase or excuse gender-based harassment and violence. Naming the behaviour can be an important first step in signalling that it is unacceptable, disrespectful, hurtful or harmful. Equally, it is important to be able to name the positive behaviour to provide endorsement for and encouragement of these behaviours. Use a strengths-based approach to behaviour management, aiming to find at least 5 to 8 positives to acknowledge for any negative behaviour that must be named, for example, 'It's good to see you ready and listening', 'I see you have already made a start' or 'It's great to see you have all lined up so quickly.'

10. Sum up by reviewing the idea that gender-based violence is not just physical but also verbal (mean talk) and emotional (hurting people's feelings). It causes hurt and harm. Explain that when that violence is about excluding or hurting people just because of their gender, it is called gender-based violence. It is not respectful. Other people can help by not joining in with violence, telling people that violence is hurtful, asking them to stop, getting away to safety or getting help.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

11. Inform students, 'In the next lesson on this topic we will be practising ways to show respect in these kinds of situations. In later lessons, we will also practise ways to seek help.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get support.
12. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
13. Following the review section of the lesson, finish with a quick game or fun activity to refocus students' thinking and to lift the mood for everyone after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Invite students to comment on how they think the class addressed the learning intentions. Were students able to identify the emotions people can have when they experience gender-based violence? Seek one or 2 examples. Were students able to identify the feelings in the body that people can have when they experience gender-based violence? Seek one or 2 examples. Were they able to think of some things that friends can do to help?

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

Topic 08

Activity 2: The opposite of violence is respect

Informed by the evidence base

The attitudes that children and young people hold towards violence are greatly influenced by their views on gender. They have strongly developed views about what is normal, expected and appropriate for boys, girls, men and women to do. However, these views can and do evolve in response to their experiences and the modelling provided by adults and older peers.

The simple role-plays used in this activity give students a chance to practise and model a range of possibilities for respectful action. Research highlights that programs are more likely to be successful if they teach prevention skills through active rehearsal via role-play, rather than passive learning, for example, watching the teacher model skills or viewing a film.[75-77] Use of applied participatory methods like role-play is central to the effectiveness of prevention education programs that aim to build prosocial skills and attitudes.[12] This is because it is more challenging to show a strategy in action, than to describe it as an option. When peers demonstrate and endorse positive behaviours, they engage with the challenge of taking theory to practice. Sharing this with their peers can help to build social norms that support the use of these behaviours.

When students role-play, they also benefit from standing in the shoes of others. This can assist in the development of empathy. The development of empathy is pivotal in the prevention of discrimination and violence. Peers who have an empathetic engagement with the target of violence are more likely to proactively respond with acts of support or kindness or to signal to those using the violence that they do not endorse such acts.[78] Those with rights-affirming attitudes are less likely to engage in gender-based violence.[56, 57] Teachers with higher levels of empathy and greater awareness of the effect that violence can have on victims are more likely to intervene when they see or hear about instances of bullying.[79] Continuing to develop students' 'emotions' vocabulary, and encouraging them to monitor emotions in themselves and others, helps to build empathy.

Learning intentions

- Students will name different types of Students will identify that the opposite of violence is respect.
- Students will role-play ways that people can organise to play with others in a way that is friendly, gender fair and respectful.
- Students will identify and demonstrate strategies that peers can use to help solve problems in a respectful way.

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 and 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 any disclosure, and the fidelity of the lesson. If 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.

Equipment

- Copy of scenarios to be used
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today we will be talking about how people can show respect instead of violence. We will act out some ways to do this. We will also practise ways friends can help. How do you feel about what we will learn? If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy – for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support. If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Ask students to help explain what we mean by respect. What does it look like or sound like if someone is showing respect for someone else? Explain that the opposite of violence is respect.

3. Tell the class that in the stories you are going to share, one of the characters has a problem with showing respect. They need advice about how to stop behaving in a way that hurts others, and how to show respect instead. They need to be shown how to do this. Invite students to become the 'coaches' who can help the character to understand what they are doing wrong and show the character what a respectful way of doing things could look like.

4. Present the below scenarios to the class. First, present the problem, and then engage students in suggesting and demonstrating what an alternative and appropriately respectful strategy would look or sound like. Invite a round of applause from students for demonstrations that show a friendly or respectful way to talk to peers.

5. Present the first scenario, ask for some suggestions, and then provide students time in groups of 3 or 4 to prepare a role-play to show either a respectful alternative or a positive peer support action.

Scenario 1

A student hits or shoves others when they don't get to go first in the game.

Respectful alternatives

What are some respectful and fair ways of working out who will go first? Who can show what this might look like? Are there any other ideas about how to do this? Who can show another approach the student could use? Students may need prompting to remember coping strategies from Topic 3, Activity 4 such as balloon breathing, pressing hands together or counting.

Peer support actions

Who can show how friends can help if this situation happens?

6. Invite some demonstrations of what it might look like or sound like if some friends nearby said something to help the child understand how their actions are causing hurt or harm. Look for opportunities to point out the importance of naming the offending behaviour and of asking people to stop.

7. Invite some demonstrations of what it might look like if peers help in a positive and respectful way. You may need to remind students that in some games, people can join in at any time (for example, kick-to-kick football). However, sometimes, when we ask to join a game (for example, a board game), we might have to wait until the current game finishes and a new one begins. When this happens, and our friends ask us to wait until the new game begins, we are not being excluded.

8. Work through scenarios 2, 3 and 4 in turn. As you do so, ask for some suggestions, and then allocate tasks, and provide students time in groups of 3 or 4 to prepare a role-play to show either a respectful alternative or a positive peer support action, in relation to their allocated scenario.

Scenario 2

In one group some boys are playing ball. Trudy asks to play. One of the boys says, 'Go away! Only boys can play ball with us.'

Respectful alternatives

What are some respectful and fair ways of responding to this gender-unfair comment and working out who can join in a ball game? Who can show what this might look like? Are there any other ideas about how to do this? Who can show another approach?

Peer support actions

Who can show how friends can help if this situation happens?

Scenario 3

Some girls are playing a game making elf houses in the sandpit. A boy asks to play. One of the girls says, 'Go away! Only girls can play this game.'

Respectful alternatives

What are some respectful and fair ways of responding to this gender-unfair comment and working out who can join in a game in the sandpit? Who can show what this might look like? Are there any other ideas about how to do this? Who can show another approach?

Peer support actions

Who can show how friends can help if this situation happens?

Scenario 4

Some students on the play equipment tell a transgender playmate that they can't have a turn on the slide. One of students says, 'We don't want you to play with us because you aren't a proper girl. Only real girls can play this game.'

Respectful alternatives

What are some respectful and fair ways of responding to this gender-unfair comment and working out who can join in a game in the sandpit? Who can show what this might look like? Are there any other ideas about how to do this? Who can show another approach?

Peer support actions

Who can show how friends can help if this situation happens?

9. Invite some demonstrations to show what a respectful alternative might look like in each of the scenarios, and some demonstrations of what it could look like if peers help in a positive and respectful way.
10. Point out that in both examples people have been excluding others in a mean way based on their gender. This is not gender fair. Remind students that children of all genders can mix and play together. Remind students about the key messages from activities in Topic 7. People can play or learn to play any game or activity, regardless of their gender. It is good to be able to include people.

Coaching point

Using solutions-focused approaches in role-play. Avoid naturalistic reenactments of violence in classroom role-plays. They can attract laughter in response or become the most riveting part of the presentation. This can inadvertently work to normalise the violence or to minimise its negative impact.[80, 81] This is particularly true when those role-playing the target feel they must show their 'strength' and thereby refuse to reveal the negative effects of the victimisation upon them. Use the help-seeking role-plays to show the help-seeking action, not to re-enact the gender-based violenc contained in the scenario.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

11. Inform students, 'In the next lesson on this topic we will learn about ways to ask permission from people. We will also be learning that you can say "no" when people want to take or borrow your things, or when people want to touch you in a way that is not okay for you.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get support.
12. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with students who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
13. Provide a fun energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after this potentially sensitive content.

Review

Conclude by inviting students to comment on whether they think the class met the learning intentions. Were they able to identify what it feels like when friends play with them in a way that is friendly, gender fair and respectful? Seek some examples of how the activity helped them to do this. Were they able to identify and demonstrate strategies that peers can use to solve problems in a respectful way? Seek some examples of how the activity helped them to do this.

Coaching point

Playtime check-ups. Make regular opportunities to check in with students about how they are managing to 'play fair' and play 'gender fair' during break times. Reflect on how to ensure gender-fair play. Avoid use of a 'boys will be boys' script, as this will signal that this is an acceptable performance of masculinity. Additionally, help students to consider alternative options if you observe that girls, members of minority groups and students with disability comply when dominant students take over a playspace. To simply accept these norms may erroneously signal to students that boys or certain groups are entitled to more than their share of resources and should not be expected to exert the same control over their bodies as others.

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

Topic 08

Activity 3: What does it mean to ask, give or refuse consent?

Informed by the evidence base

Just as gender norms and stereotypes are often reinforced in children's literature, often the stories and messages to which children are exposed in the media (for example, through television shows and advertisements) reinforce traditional gender norms and expectations.[82-84] Some research has suggested a link between television viewing and learning of stereotypical gender perceptions among children.[84] In this context, children benefit from positive opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes in creative ways. This opens up possibilities for children to recognise the potential limitations of traditional gender expectations and the opportunities that open up when we remove them.

Learning intentions

- Students will learn what it means to ask for consent.
- Students will learn what it means to give or refuse consent.
- Students will practise strategies they can use when they need to seek, give or refuse consent.

Equipment

- Pens and paper
- Access to the 'emotions' lists from Topic 1: Emotional literacy
- Access to the 'strengths' lists from Topic 2: Personal and cultural strengths
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today we will be talking about what it means to ask for permission or consent to do something. We will also talk about how to say 'no' to people if you don't want them to do something that bothers you. This will include how we can say no if someone wants to touch you in ways that are not okay for you. If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy – for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Ask students if they can give some examples of what it sounds like when someone asks for permission to do something. Acknowledge their examples. Explain that we also use the word 'consent' like we use the word 'permission'. When someone asks for consent, this means they ask for permission. This could sound like, 'Please, can I borrow your pencils?' or 'Is it okay to hug you?'

   When someone says 'no', this means they don't give permission or consent. This could sound like, 'No, you can't borrow my pencil' or 'No, you can't hug me.'

   When someone says 'yes', this means they do give permission or consent. This could sound like, 'Yes, you can borrow my pencils' or 'Yes, you can hug me.'

   Consent is when someone says 'yes' just because they want to. They are not made to say yes because they are scared, or because they think they should. They don't say yes because they want a reward like getting present, a sticker or some lollies. They say yes, just because they want to.

   When 2 people consent to do something, that means they both agree. They both say yes, just because they want to.

3. Provide some time for students to do a drawing of someone saying 'no' or refusing consent or permission when someone asks them. They are saying no in a firm but respectful way. Invite students to share their drawing and explain the situation they have chosen where they might want to say no, or not give consent. Be alert to any need for protective interrupting with this drawing and storytelling and follow up with students as appropriate.
4. Summarise the types of situations shown, for example, borrowing possessions, joining a game or refusing to do something mean, violent or dangerous. Make sure that you emphasise that we can refuse consent when people want us to do something we think is mean, dangerous or wrong. We can also say 'no' or refuse consent when someone wants to touch our bodies in a way we don't want to be touched, or when they are being violent towards us.
5. Ask students what if might feel like if they want to say no to someone who is bigger or older than them, or when they want to say no to a group of people. Gather some 'emotions' words. Refer back to activities from Topic 1: Emotional literacy if needed. Students might note emotions like fear or embarrassment.
6. Ask students to think back to their lists of personal and cultural strengths. Provide access to the 'strengths' lists developed in Topic 2: Personal and cultural strengths to assist with this. Ask what kinds of strengths they might need to use if they want to say no to someone who is bigger or older than them, or when they want to say no to a group of people. Students may suggest strengths like courage and determination. Acknowledge that each of us have previous experience of being brave and determined.
7. Invite students to demonstrate what their 'brave' statue would look like. Provide a demonstration or reminder about how they used their bodies to make statues to show different emotions (refer to Topic 1, Activities 1, 2 and 3 and Topic 3, Activities 3 and 4). Arrange for them to note and admire these strong poses.
8. Invite students to show what their 'determined' statue would look like. Arrange for them to note and admire these strong poses.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

9. Inform students, 'In the next lesson on this topic we will be learning about early warning signs that our bodies give if someone touches us in a way that is not okay for us, or if we are being treated badly or in a violent way.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get support.
10. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with student(s) who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
11. Provide a fun energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after such potentially sensitive content.

Coaching point

Terminology. Some people prefer to use the word 'target' rather than 'victim' to imply that the person who used violence made a choice and that their act was deliberate. Some prefer to use the word 'survivor' or 'victim-survivor' rather than the word 'victim' as they find this word more suggestive of strength and recovery. Others prefer the word 'victim' as suggesting the innocence of the targeted party. It is important to avoid use of the labels 'bully' and 'perpetrator' as these suggests an identity. Comment instead on the behaviour of the person doing the wrong thing.

Review

Invite students to note the ways they have met the learning intentions. They could describe how they have shown they know what it means to ask for consent, refuse consent or give consent.

Coaching point

Heightened awareness of consent. Follow up in class across the coming weeks with extra emphasis on students and staff asking for consent in everyday interactions. Reinforce and celebrate with students their positive enactment of respectfully seeking, giving or denying consent and respectfully accepting another person's rights when consent is denied. Making this extra effort encourages students to normalise seeking consent as a respectful habit in everyday life.

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Topic 08

Activity 4: Respect my body, respect my personal space

Informed by the evidence base

It is important to teach students that other people do not have the right to hurt or touch their bodies inappropriately. The terms 'okay' and 'not okay' can be used to refer to rules, and are useful in teaching about the right to be safe. Later in life students will be able to understand that sexual touch between consenting parties over the age of consent is part of healthy human expression.[85]

Programs that increase children's understanding that they have rights over their bodies, and that there are others who have a responsibility to help them protect these rights, can enable children to seek help. Effective child abuse prevention education programs teach body ownership and the correct names for genitals. Children who do not know these words may find it harder to disclose or to be understood by others if they ever need to report sexual abuse. Additionally, if adults around them do not say these words, or if they model silencing these words, children can pick up that these things must not be spoken about to adults [86]. Students provided with comprehensive child safety programs, including how to identify 'okay' and 'not-okay' touch, demonstrate an increased ability to identify potentially abusive situations and to differentiate between 'okay' and 'not-okay' touch.[87, 88] They are more able to recognise and name unsafe and confusing touch, and show increased capacity to ask for it to stop, use strategies to protect themselves and seek assistance from trusted adults in having it stop.

The need for such programs is evident, as prevalence data reveals that over one in 10 Australians aged 18 years and over (13 per cent) experienced abuse before the age of 15. This includes 7.7 per cent who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15, and 8.5 per cent who experienced physical abuse.

In the first incidence of sexual abuse experienced by women before the age of 15, 12 per cent were aged 0 to 4 years, 48 per cent were aged 5 to 9 years, and 40 per cent were aged 10 to 14 years. In the first incidence of sexual abuse experienced by men before the age of 15, 6.8 per cent were aged 0 to 4 years, 45 per cent were aged 5 to 9 years, and 48 per cent were aged 10 to 14 years.[89]

Data collected from men who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 years showed that 98 per cent reported experiencing the abuse by someone known to them. The most common perpetrator type was a known, non-familial person (a known person who wasn't a family member, relative or in-law), with 65 per cent of sexually abused men experiencing abuse by this perpetrator type. Of the women who experienced sexual abuse before the age of 15 years, 91 per cent experienced abuse by a known, non-familiar person (a known person who wasn't a family member, relative or in-law), with just under half of sexually abused women (47 per cent) experiencing abuse by a known person who was not a family member, 28.4 per cent experiencing the abuse by a relative or in-law, and 17.4 per cent experiencing the abuse by a parent.[90]

Research shows significant knowledge gains and improved self-protective behaviours as a result of sexual abuse prevention education.[91-94] A review of 24 child sexual abuse prevention programs showed that these programs increased children's knowledge about abuse prevention and improved their skills in protective behaviours.[95] This study found no evidence that the programs increased children's anxiety or fear.

Learning intentions

- Students will learn about which parts of their body are kept more private than others.
- Students will learn there are some early warning signs we can feel in our bodies when we don't feel safe.
- Students will play a game to remind them that when we feel our early warning signs, this can be a sign we need to move to a safer space.

Equipment

- Paper
- Pencils
- Drawing or display of a child's body
- Tape or yarn to mark a long line on the floor
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Coaching point

Reconnecting with prior learning. In this activity, students consider actions they can take if they encounter a situation that makes them feel unsafe. The activities in Topic 1: Emotional literacy, Topic 4: Problem-solving and Topic 6: Help-seeking provide an important foundation for these activities. Consider revisiting some of these activities prior to this lesson.

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

Inform students:

Today we will be talking about what it means to ask for permission or consent to do something. We will also talk about how to say 'no' to people if you don't want them to do something that bothers you. This will include how we can say no if someone wants to touch you in ways that are not okay for you. If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy – for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

1. Bring students together for circle time. Provide a model drawing of a child's body. Explain to students that you are going to talk about keeping our personal space, and about the more private parts of our body. Refer back to the terms for the body parts that they have already learnt about if they have already learnt about body parts as part of their health and sexuality education.
2. Invite students to think about what parts of their body are usually covered by their bathers or their underwear. Explain that sometimes we call these the 'private' body parts, because these are usually the parts that we keep covered when we are in public places.
3. Explain that these body parts that we keep private have lots of names. Some are slang names or names that we use when we are little. There are also the scientific names. For example, at the back people have a bottom and an anus. We also call the bottom our buttocks. At the front, males and females are different. Males have a penis. Females have a vulva, which is the outside parts, and the vagina, which is inside the body. Sometimes we call these body parts 'private'. On the chest, children have nipples. As females grow older, they grow breasts where the nipples are. Point to the relevant parts of the body using the diagram.
4. Explain to students that for everyone, their body is their own. Other people are not allowed to hurt their body, and they don't have to let other people touch their body. Sometimes we tell people we don't want them so close in our personal space. That means we don't want them so close to our body. Personal space is an area like a circle or bubble around our body. It might be about an elbow's length away (hold up your elbows to show how personal space is defined) or it might be bigger or smaller, depending on how we feel.
5. Explain that students are going to learn about early warning signs (EWS). These are feelings we can get in our body when someone is scaring us or wanting to touch us in a way that does not seem okay. We can get these feelings sometimes if someone asks us to do something we think we should not do. We might get these feelings when we feel a bit scared. We call them early warning signs because they are warning us that maybe something bad will happen to us. Sometimes we call them EWS. We make EWS sound like it is about something yukky. The EWS sound can help us hear that something is yukky.
6. Invite students to name some feelings we can get in our bodies when we are a bit scared, or when we don't like a person touching us. Students might suggest sensations like feeling funny or sick in the tummy, feeling your heart go fast, feeling like you have frozen or can't move, feeling you have to breathe fast, feeling like you want to cry or feeling like you want to scream.

7. Mark onto the body outline some of the places in the body where we can feel these early warning signs. Reinforce that everyone will have some EWS, but that we don't all have the same sensations in our bodies when we get warning signals.
8. Tell students that EWS are useful because they can help tell us when something is not right for us or when we might not be safe. When we get them, we can tell an adult we don't feel safe. If we get them when someone is trying to touch our body in a way that doesn't feel right, or someone hurts our body, we can say 'no', we can try to get away, and we can tell an adult about what has happened.
9. Acknowledge the work students have done to learn about EWS. Introduce the Frogs in the Pond Game as one that will help them remember that when we feel 'wobbly' or uncertain, it can be a warning sign, and it is good to go to where we feel safe.

Activity 4A: Frogs in the Pond Game

10. Tell the following story.

    There is a big hungry crocodile that likes to eat frogs when they are in the water. There is a big hungry bird that likes to eat frogs when they are on the riverbank. When the bird comes, the smart little frog hides in the water. When the crocodile comes, the smart little frog hides on the riverbank. When a Big Cloud comes, the frog can't see into the water to check for crocodiles. When a Big Cloud comes, the frog can't see if there is a hungry bird in the sky. So, when Big Cloud comes, the clever frog sits on the very edge of the bank so it can go quickly to the water or to the bank. If a time comes when the water and the riverbank both seem too dangerous, the clever frog jumps into a boat and asks for help to be rescued from the crocodile.
11. Mark a line on the floor. Make one side of it the pond, and the other side the riverbank. Explain to students that when the teacher calls, 'Hungry crocodile' the students jump to the bank side. Demonstrate a crocodile snapping jaws in front of the face as a visual to accompany the call of 'Hungry crocodile'. When the teacher calls, 'Hungry bird' the students jump to the water side. Demonstrate a bird flapping its wings, as a visual to accompany the call of 'Hungry bird'. Practise a few times. Explain that when the teacher calls, 'Big cloud' the students stand on the line. Here they try to balance on one foot without falling into the water or onto the bank. When the time of greatest danger comes, the teacher will call, 'Find a lifeboat' and students must run to touch a chair or a table. Play a few rounds.
12. Following the game, reinforce some key messages. Explain:

    Just like the clever frog we can go to a safe place if we feel our EWS. The frog has different safe places at different times – in the pond and on the bank. Sometimes things go wrong though, and we don't feel safe in our usual places. That is when we ask for help, like the frog jumping into the lifeboat. We have different safe places at home and at school. What are some of our different safe places at school?
13. Record students' responses on the board.
14. Remind students about the safe spaces available to them in the school:

    These safe spaces can be good to go to, to help keep us safe. But sometimes, just like the frog, we can be unsure about whether something is safe or yukky or dangerous. If we feel wobbly, or unsure, this can be an EWS. When this happens, we can tell someone and we can ask for help.

Provide content advice prior to an activity/lesson

15. Inform students, 'In the next lesson on this topic we will be learning about good and bad secrets and that some secrets should not be kept.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get support.
16. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with student(s) who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
17. Provide a fun energising activity following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood after potentially sensitive content.

Review

Invite students to note the ways they have been able to name some early warning signs that we can feel in our bodies as a signal to watch out for our safety, or to get help. Acknowledge that they have also refreshed their knowledge of the names of the body parts that we keep more private.

Coaching point

Talking about body parts and privacy. This activity helps students to learn that there are some parts of the body that are private. It is important to emphasise that while we keep these body parts private, there is nothing bad about them, they are just more private. It is ideal to provide age-appropriate sexuality education prior to commencing a focus on abuse prevention. Age-appropriate sexuality education includes teaching students the names of parts of the body for including penis, vulva, vagina, breasts, nipples, buttocks (or bottom) and anus. Being able to name their body parts can assist students who need to report abuse. When talking about private or sexual body parts, students may giggle or say that it's rude. Do not reprimand them for this. This is a common response, and it can signal embarrassment. As you model the confidence to talk in a regular way about these matters, students will begin to develop a similar confidence. Teachers can identify that they hear this initial giggling as a sign that students are still getting used to talking about this topic, and that over time, a sign of their confidence will be that the giggling reduces and goes away.

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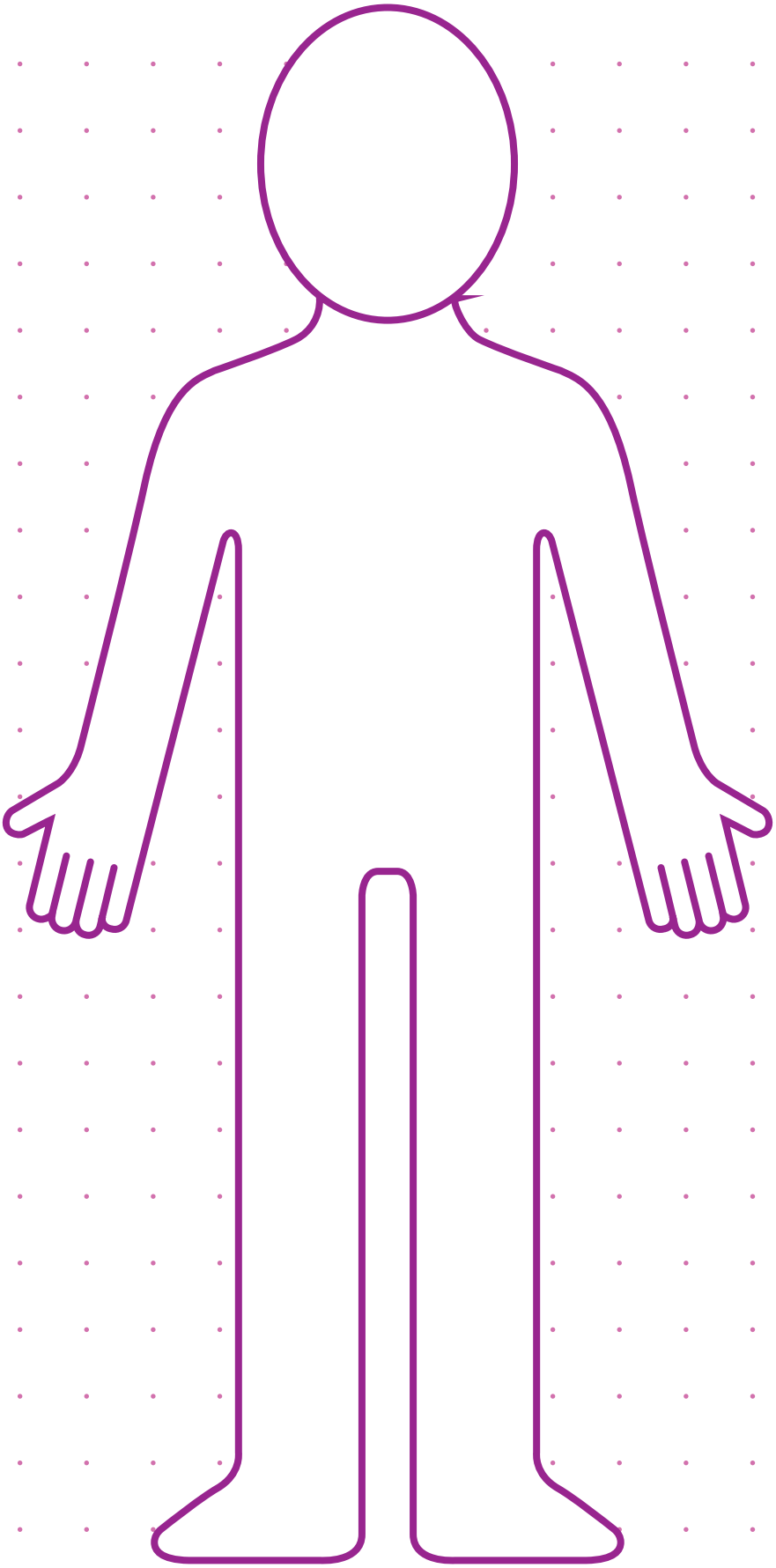


Topic 08

Activity 5: Some secrets should not be kept

Informed by the evidence base

Adults who abuse children can use very sophisticated grooming techniques to elicit their trust. They may initially befriend a child (and their family) providing attention, praise, fun and gifts. They may work at making the child feel special. Adult perpetrators can lead a child into thinking that the activity is their fault. They often instil fear or guilt, or a sense of closeness, all of which can drive the child to keep the abuse secret.[96, 97] Given the subtle nature of grooming behaviour it can be extremely difficult for children to recognise that they are being manipulated.[96, 97] Children and young people also face many barriers in disclosing sexual abuse.[98] These include such factors as living in families with multiple problems like family violence, substance abuse, mental health problems or absence of adults and peers in whom they can confide, fear of not being believed, feelings of shame, inability to understand abuse, lack of adequate help-seeking knowledge, stigma about disclosing sexual abuse, direct threats made by perpetrators [99] and children's fear of family breakup.[100] Research shows that most child sexual abuse victims either do not disclose their sexual abuse or wait for a long time before they disclose.[101] Disclosure by a child is more likely to happen accidentally rather than purposefully [102]. Accidental disclosure often occurs due to observation and follow-up by a third party who follows up a concern or suspicion.[103] Disclosures are often tentative, can be partial or full, and may be followed by a retraction.[104] The provision of safe spaces where adults ask children about their circumstances, notice their struggles and listen to their concerns can enable disclosure of child sexual abuse.[98] In addition, providing age-appropriate prevention education that identifies abusive situations have proved to be effective in increasing the likelihood of disclosing sexual abuse.[95]

Learning intentions

- Students will learn the difference between safe secrets and unsafe secrets.
- Students will learn that unsafe secrets include those where someone is being hurt, doing something wrong, or being touched in a way that is not okay.
- Students will identify that unsafe secrets should not be kept.

Equipment

- 'Is this a safe or unsafe secret?' scenarios, cut up and placed in a box or bag
- Wibbly puppet character or soft toy from Topic 5
- A box or bag
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   In this session, we are going to be learning about different types of secrets and which secrets are safe to keep and which should be told. If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy, for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

2. Invite students to sit in a circle on the mat. Explain, 'Today we are going to talk about secrets and the different types of secrets.' Ask, 'What do you think a secret is?' Invite students to share their definition of the word 'secret', which is something to be kept to yourself or to be shared with just a few people.

3. Explain there are 2 different types of secrets, safe secrets and unsafe secrets:

   Safe secrets are the ones that are okay to keep. They are usually surprises to make people happy, like keeping a secret about what they are getting for their birthday. It is okay to keep these secrets. They don't last very long.

   Unsafe secrets are secrets that should not be kept. We should tell so we can get some help. Unsafe secrets are about something that is bad or wrong, about someone being mean or violent or about someone being very scared or hurt. We should not keep these secrets.

4. Reintroduce Wibbly, the character or puppet from Topic 5, Activity 4. Explain that Wibbly needs some help again:

   Wibbly is here again today. Please say hello.

   Wibbly tells me they need help to work out which secrets are safe to keep, and which are not safe to keep. Wibbly has brought this box with different secrets in it. Wibbly wants us to teach them which are safe, and which are not safe secrets to keep. They would like us to listen to each secret and help decide if it is okay to keep or if Wibbly should tell someone, so they can get some help.

5. Explain you are going to invite students to come forward and pick a secret from the bag and give it to you to read aloud for the class. The class will then suggest whether the secret is one to keep or one that should be told.

6. As students take turns to come forward to pick a secret out of the bag. Read it to the class and ask, 'Is this a safe secret that is okay to keep, or an unsafe secret which should be told?' Reinforce the reasons for each being a safe or unsafe secret, for example:

   - 'This is a safe secret because it is to make someone happy, and it won't last long.'
   - 'This is an unsafe secret because someone is getting hurt or doing the wrong thing.'
   - 'This is an unsafe secret because some things on the internet are not safe or good for children to watch. It is best for a parent to know what children have seen and to help them make safe choices.'
   - 'This is an unsafe secret because people are not allowed to play with children's private parts.'

7. On completion, sum up by reinforcing that if we are not sure if a secret is unsafe or not, it is best to tell.

8. Check in with Wibbly and pass on their message to the class:

   Wibbly is saying 'Thanks so much for all the help. Now I know it's okay to keep the secret about the surprise party, the birthday present and the special cake. Also, it's good that now I know it is not okay to keep unsafe secrets – like about people getting hurt, or about big kids or grown-ups wanting to touch children on their private parts.' Wibbly says 'I think that unsafe secrets can make people very tired and worried. It's best to tell, so we can get help.' Let's give Wibbly some great big cheers and claps and let Wibbly know that they can come back anytime if they want some more help from this class. Oh – one more thing – Wibbly is reminding me that children like games to help them to be cheerful when they have done some serious work in class. Wibbly is suggesting we should play a game at the end of this lesson. What do you think? Should we do that?

9. Inform students, 'Remember, if you have a worry about being asked to keep secrets, you can ask to speak to me, another teacher or a helper outside of class time to get support. Be alert to any need for protective interrupting in public spaces. Inform students, 'In the next lesson on this topic, we will be practising ways to seek help if someone has been touching us in a way that is not okay for us, or if we are being treated badly or in a violent way.' Remind students that if this worries them, they can speak to you or to their helpers to get support.

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

11. To end the class on a positive note following the review section of the lesson, play a familiar, cheerful game with the class. Choose one that maintains inclusion, rather than eliminating players. Alternatively, play a dancing game with bouncy music, like 'musical statues', 'animal dancing' or follow-the-leader dancing.
    - In 'musical statues', people dance while the music plays and freeze when it stops. There is no need to make anyone go out.
    - In 'animal dancing', the teacher calls out the name of the animal, then people dance like that animal until the music stops. Then they freeze. The teacher then calls the name of a different animal for the next round of the music, for example, a monkey, chicken, fish, bird or cat.
    - In 'follow-the-leader' dancing, one person takes the lead and the others copy their dance moves. After a while, a new person can become the leader.

Review

Acknowledge that the class has demonstrated that they know the difference between safe and unsafe secrets. Remind them that if they have a worry or experience some early warning signs or feelings in their body, it is good to tell someone, so that they can get some help.

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

Scenarios: Is this a safe or unsafe secret?

Scenario 1

Ashna's mum tells her what she is getting Ashna's brother for his birthday.
She asks Ashna not to tell him.

Scenario 2

Dominic was playing tickles with his teenage cousin Matteo. Matteo tickled Dominic inside his underpants. He said it was a new secret tickling game just for them. He told Dominic to keep this a secret.

Scenario 3

Lottie's Grandpa is turning 70 and her family has planned a surprise party with all the cousins there. Her dad asked Lottie to keep the party a secret from Grandpa.

Scenario 4

Akot asks his mum to help him make a surprise breakfast for his dad on Father's Day. He wants his dad to stay out of the kitchen so they can get it ready in secret.

Scenario 5

Sometimes there is really bad fighting at Min's house. It is the grown-ups fighting, not the children. It makes Min scared, and sometimes their mum cries. Min's dad tells Min not to tell anyone about it.

Scenario 6

The grown-up who lives next door to Kali gives her lots of presents. One day he made her touch his private parts. He tells Kali not to tell her parents or he won't give her presents anymore.

Scenario 7

Ben and Jack are cousins. One night they had a sleepover at Ben's house. Ben hid an iPad under the pillow so they could watch it after they were supposed to be asleep. When they were looking for something to watch, an image of a private body part popped up. Jack said they shouldn't look at it, because it wasn't right for them to see it, and it was making him feel scared. But Ben was laughing at it and wouldn't turn off the iPad. Ben's parents heard them arguing and came in and asked what was going on. Ben pretended nothing was happening. But Jack had the sick feeling in his tummy that you get when you have an unsafe secret.

Topic 08

Activity 6: No, Go, Tell – how to get help if someone abuses you

Informed by the evidence base

Children in preschool and the early years of school are often seen as being too young to understand or to have experienced gender discrimination or gender violence. However, young children can and do experience gender discrimination and violence. Hence, they need the language and strategies to challenge these experiences and to protect themselves. Self-care and help-seeking strategies for example, the No, Go, Tell model used in this activity, empower children to assert their rights over their own bodies, and to gain the support they need if someone is breaching their rights. While people are often worried that knowledge of things 'wrong' in the world may tarnish children's innocence, it is essential that they are aware that their body belongs to them and that they have the right to say 'no' and get help. Family and sexual violence occurs across all cultures, ages and socio-economic groups in Australia.[90] Successful programs teach children that it is not their fault if they experience abuse, while also building self-protection skills.[87] School-based abuse prevention programs have been found to be effective in increasing student knowledge and protective behaviours.[75-77] These programs aim to build children's comfort level in disclosing inappropriate sexual advances.[75]

Learning intentions

- Students will practise ways to tell people when they do not like the way their body is being touched or treated by others.
- Students will practise ways to seek safety or seek help when affected by violence or inappropriate forms of bodily contact..

Equipment

- Display the No, Go, Tell model
- Diagram of children in their bathers
- Scenarios
- A cheerful game to play or some cheerful or bouncy music for dancing

Coaching point

Why we use sensitive scenarios. The scenarios provided in this activity are designed to have the class focus on what a victim or peer can do to get help for a serious or persistent problem relating to gender-based violence. Students should not be asked to reveal or share their own experiences on this topic in the public space of the classroom. Invite those who wish to follow up with a concern to talk privately with a teacher, wellbeing staff or other trusted adults.

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

Provide content advice at the beginning of an activity/lesson

Method

1. Inform students:

   Today we will be talking about how to seek help if someone is hurting you or wants to touch you in ways that are not okay for you. If any part of the lesson makes you feel upset, or wobbly, remember to try a coping strategy, for example, taking some deep breaths, because using your coping strategies may help you to stay calm. You can also speak to me, another teacher or a helper to get some support.If this topic makes you feel wobbly today, you can do one of our quiet activities or we can arrange another place for you to work. You might want to talk later with someone else here at school or perhaps at home, and that is also okay. Remember that what we say or do may affect other people. We can help each other by working well together.

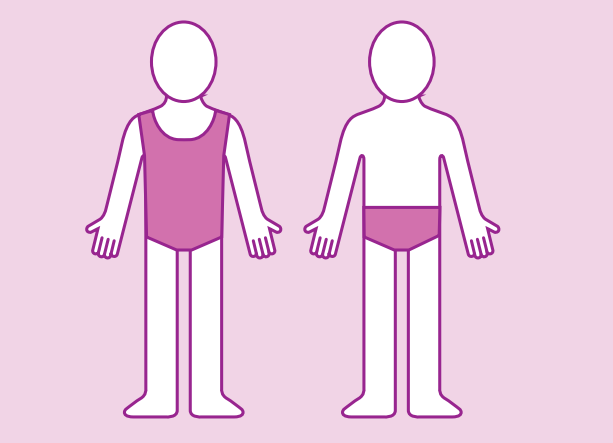
2. Introduce the No, Go, Tell model. Explain that the phrase 'No, Go, Tell' will help students remember what to do in case there is a time when someone else is making them feel uncomfortable or scared, or if a person wants to hurt their body or touch them on the private parts of their body when they are not supposed to do this.

3. Talk about 'no'. Ask students, 'Who knows how to say no?' Acknowledge that everyone already knows how to say no. When do they say no? After students have given some answers, emphasise that when they were little they learnt to say 'no' to tell people to stop doing something, or to tell someone that they didn't want to do something. 'No' is a very important word and that is why we learn it so early in our lives. If we can, we say 'no' if someone is trying to hurt us or touch us in ways we do not want to be touched.
4. Explain that 'no' is the first step in the No, Go, Tell model.
    - I can say 'no' if someone wants me to do something that makes me feel uncomfortable. When I feel this kind of uncomfortable, I might even get a strange sick feeling in my tummy or a lumpy feeling in my throat.
    - 'Go' means I can move away. I can find a safe place to go. I can do this to get away from a scary person, or to get away from someone who might hurt me, or who is making me feel uncomfortable about my body, and I can go offline or stop watching something that is making me feel bad.
    - 'Tell' means I can tell someone what has happened. I can tell someone how I feel. I can tell a safe grown-up if someone is hurting my body or wanting to touch private parts of my body. If that grown-up won't listen or won't believe me, I can try telling a different grown-up.

Coaching point

The different kinds of body warnings. When discussing the 'no' component of the model, assist students to identify times they feel uncomfortable body sensations in response to occurrences they are nervous about, like going to the dentist, or doing something new or challenging. They might feel nervous, embarrassed or shy. These feelings are different from when they feel uncomfortable sensations because a person is hurting them on purpose, or if someone is forcing contact with their body that is not supposed to happen.

5. Look at the pictures of the children's bodies again. Use your own model to point to parts of the body like hands, arms and legs, and explain that we touch these parts of bodies when we play. But we are careful not to hurt others' bodies. However, the private parts under our underwear or our bathers are more private. We don't use these parts in games with children or with grownups. We can say 'no' if someone wants to do this.



6. Point out that sometimes people find it hard to say 'no'. If this happens, they can try to go or move away to a safer place.
7. Acknowledge that sometimes children can't just go because they want to. Explain that there is one other important thing to do. This is to 'tell'.
8. Talk about 'tell'. Emphasise that it is important to tell a trusted adult if someone hurts your body, wants you to do things that are not right for you to do, touches private parts of your body, or touches you in ways you do not like. Even if you can't say 'no', or can't go, afterwards it is good to 'tell'.
9. Remind students of the time when they made a list of people they could ask for help (in Topic 6, Activity 4: Helping hands).
10. Explain to students:

    The law says that adults and older children or teenagers are not allowed to ask children to do sexual things with them. This means that if you are under 12, another person can't touch you sexually on your private parts and can't get you to touch them sexually on their private parts. It is never a child's fault if this happens. It is the older person's fault, because it is the older person who is breaking the rule. If someone tries to do this, it is good to use the No, Go, Tell steps as best you can. Even if you can't do the 'tell' step at the time, it is still good to do it later. It is always a good idea to use the 'tell' step.
11. Reinforce the No, Go, Tell model with students using the following scenarios as the point of focus. Take each scenario in turn, asking students to suggest answers for each of the key steps of the No, Go, Tell model.

Scenario 1

Ellie and her brother Malik are playing. Ellie starts to practise her karate kicks on Malik. Malik asks her to stop because it's hurting him. She keeps doing it and laughs, saying it's a fun game.

What could Malik say? Where could he go? Who could he tell?

Scenario 2

It is home time. Lu is waiting at the school gate for Grandpa to arrive. Lots of children are waiting there too. Some older boys walk up and bump into Lu. One of the boys says, 'Are you a boy or a girl? I know how to find out!' The boy tries to pull down Lu's tracksuit pants. Lu feels very upset. Their early warning signals are happening.
They feel a lump in their throat, like they wish they could yell or scream.

What could Lu say? Where could they go? Who could they tell?

Scenario 3

Emma is at a family barbecue. When her dad's friend Mr Gary arrives, he comes down to the part of the garden where Emma is playing by herself. Mr Gary asks Emma for some hugs. Emma only likes to hug her mum and dad and her grandparents. She does not like the way Mr Gary always tries to give her cuddles and then wants her to sit on his knee. Her early warning signals are happening. She feels like her heart is beating very fast. She wants him to go back to the grown-ups and leave her alone.

What could she say? Where could she go? Who could she tell?

Scenario 4

Mikie has an uncle who he thinks is a bit scary. His uncle minds him sometimes while his mum goes to do some shopping. His uncle always wants Mikie to sit on his lap and read stories. He brings lollies and tries to make Mikie sit on his lap while he eats them. Mikie likes stories and he likes lollies, but he does not want to sit on his uncle's lap. It gives him a strange feeling like something is wrong, and it is a bit scary. His early warning signals are happening. He feels a bit funny in the tummy.

What could Mikie say? Where could he go? Who could he tell?

Scenario 5

Jed is good at doing things on the computer. Sometimes he is allowed to watch some YouTube videos when he is having quiet time at the end of the day. One day he clicks on a video about wild animals and finds it is not the nice thing he thought he would see. Instead, he sees something that causes a kind of scary feeling in his body.

The video is of grown-ups who mostly do not have clothes on. He thinks maybe he should not be watching this. Maybe it is just for grown-ups. He is scared about whether he should tell his parents or not. His early warning signals are happening. His hands are feeling shaky, and he feels kind of scared.

What could Jed do? Where could he go? Who could he tell?

12. Acknowledge students' contributions, and the way they have shown they understand ways to do the No, Go, Tell steps in the safety model.
13. Acknowledge that sometimes, when adults are in a hurry, or are busy with other things, or when we feel scared, it can be harder to ask for help. But it is still important to do this. Even if this means trying more than once or trying with more than one adult. We might need to use our strengths of courage or determination. Remind students of their helping hands and the people they listed that they could go to for help.
14. Use universal approaches to collecting feedback to avoid singling out individuals. For example, ask students to complete a 'Talk to a teacher' slip, which provides a safe and confidential way for students to signal that they may need extra support, or to let you know if they are feeling okay. Follow up as soon as possible with student(s) who have indicated a concerned or worried response, demonstrated changed demeanour or behaviour, or indicated their desire for help.
15. Introduce a game following the review section of the lesson to lift the mood. Remind students that they understand a lot about when it is safe to go, stop and say no. Invite students to play the Traffic Lights Game.

Activity 6A: The Traffic Lights Game

16. Explain to participants that this game will call on them to remember 4 different moves, one for each colour. Teach these moves:
    - Green = walk on the spot (like 'walk' on the traffic light)
    - Red = stand still on one leg, with a hand up making a stop sign (like 'stop' on the traffic light)
    - Yellow = turn around and around on the spot (like 'wait' on the traffic light)
    - Blue = reach up and touch the sky
17. Teach the moves one at a time. Then play a few times over.
18. After the game, point out that 'Red' is like 'no' in the No, Go, Tell model. 'Green' is like 'Go' in the No, Go, Tell model. 'Yellow' is when we need to have a bit of a think about our early warning signs. And blue, when we touch the sky, is like when we reach out and 'tell' in the No, Go, Tell model.

Review

Review the lesson by inviting students to comment on whether they think the class met the learning intentions. Were they able to think of ways to tell people when they do not like the way their body is being touched or treated by others? Were they able to think of ways to seek safety or seek help when in the presence of violence or inappropriate forms of personal contact? Seek some examples of how the activity helped them achieve the learning intentions.

Coaching point

Why include scenarios about exposure to pornography? Most young people will either accidentally or intentionally encounter online pornography at some time during childhood or early adolescence.[105] A large-scale national survey in Australia found that 44 per cent of children aged 9 to 16 had encountered sexually explicit material in the last month.[106] A United Kingdom study with young people aged 11 to 16 years found that 94 per cent had encountered pornography before the age of 14.[107] Pornography consumption can influence people's sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, as well as their perceptions of the opposite sex [108-110]. Research shows a significant relationship between high levels of pornography consumption and attitudes supporting violence against women.[110-112]

Coaching point

Using a helpline. Many adults are unaware that children as young as 5 years use the Kids Helpline to get advice. Some of the most common reasons young children ring the Kids Helpline are relationship and friendship problems, bullying, family problems, stress and abuse. This indicates the importance of providing a program that provides opportunity for students to learn about how to seek help from available adults, including their teachers. (The Kids Helpline is a free 24-hour counselling service for Australian children and young people.)

Reflecting on everyday practice

- How have the learning activities provided insight into how students experience gender relationships within and outside the classroom?
- How can teachers on yard duty assist those children who routinely experience gender-based violence or harassment in the yard and do not succeed in their own efforts to address this?
- What might the school do to ensure that students who use forms of gender-based violence learn that these behaviours are not acceptable?

Extension activities

- Have students collaborate to create a 'No, Go, Tell' poster to display in the classroom.
- Review the Kids Helpline website with students so you can see how it works.

Talking further

Encourage students to ask their parents or carers about who the helpful adults were when they were children, and who they could go to for help if their parents or carers were not available.

Additional games to foster respectful relationships

Informed by the evidence base

Games can be used to teach social and emotional competencies.[15, 113] They can also be used to revisit and reinforce inclusive gender messages, and to acknowledge and reward the class for their efforts, or as time out when students have been experiencing frustration, fatigue or conflict.[114] Having positive experiences in playing with each other in large collective games can help students to feel more connected to each other and to school.[115] This is important, as a sense of connectedness or belonging to school is a significant protective factor for young people and contributes to building their resilience. Students who feel cared for by people at their school and feel connected to learning are more likely to be motivated, confident and show improved academic outcomes.[116, 117]

Coaching point

Games are beneficial. When effectively and purposefully facilitated, collaborative games can be used to help students to mix and to strengthen social connectedness, which is a protective factor for mental wellbeing. Structured play can assist those who are anxious in social situations to participate with their peers. Games can also be used to advance social and emotional skills.[15] Following participation in the game, ask students to identify the skills they used which can also be used in other life situations. Encourage them to find key messages in the games about how to conduct respectful relationships. Games can also be used to lift the mood after engaging with sensitive material, to engage or re-energise the class, and to bring a spirit of fun and joy into the class.

The 'Sam Says' Game

Coaching point

Resisting gender policing. This variation on 'Simon says' – called 'Sam says' – can be used to reinforce what people can do. This is an important enabler for students as they work to resist limiting gender norms and the peer pressure and comments that can accompany them.

Method

1. Explain that this game is like 'Simon says'. But it is also a little bit different. Point out that you have chosen the name 'Sam' because it is a gender-neutral name – it could be used for a boy, a girl or a gender-diverse person. When the leader calls, 'Sam says "Everyone jump!"' or gives an alternative movement instruction, then the class must copy that move. But when the leader calls out 'Everyone jump!' or gives a different instruction and does not add 'Sam says', then the class must not do that movement.
2. Play a few rounds of the game so that everyone gets to practise. Eliminate those who get it wrong, but only for a few rounds. Intermittently include 'Sam says, "Everyone can join back in the game even if they went out"' to enable all students who went out to rejoin.

Review

Ask students, 'What did we need to be able to do to play the game well? How do we use those skills in class, in the playground and at home?'

The Controller Colours Game

Coaching point

Promote self-control and concentration. The Controller Colours Game can be used to develop students' skills in concentration and their confidence in their capacity to control their body. Make positive reference to self-control (as something students can do) and to concentration (as something that is possible and fun) can help to build students' awareness of their own capacity to engage at will.

Method

1. Explain to participants that this game will call on them to remember 5 different moves, one for each colour. Teach these moves:

   Green = walk on the spot (like 'walk' on the traffic light)

   Red = stand still on one leg, with a hand up making stop sign (like 'stop' on the traffic light)

   Yellow = turn round and around on the spot (like 'wait' on the traffic light)

   Brown = bob down and touch the ground

   Blue = reach up and touch the sky

2. Play a few times over. Invite a student to have a turn calling the colours. Ask, 'What do we have to do to be good at to play that game?' Example responses include listening or making the right move. Ask, 'When do we have to be able to use these skills in real life?'

Review

Point out that in this game we show we can switch from one move to another very quickly. This means we have self-control and concentration. In real life we can also feel proud if we can play different kinds of games, and work and play with different kinds of people. Being able to do different sorts of things makes us stronger and more capable. We can also stay in charge of the ways we express any angry feelings, so we don't hurt anyone or ourselves.

The Giant's Treasure Game

Coaching point

Promote group problem-solving. The Giant's Treasure Game can be used to develop skills in self-control and stillness. It can also be used to develop awareness of the possibility of team play and alertness to the availability of others to assist in solving a problem or addressing a challenge.

Method

1. Appoint one student from the group to be the Giant and to stand at one end of the room, facing the wall, with a soft toy placed on the floor directly behind them. Ask the rest of the group to line up along the starting wall at the opposite end of the room.
2. While the Giant has their back turned, the group must creep forward, attempt to steal the treasure and run all the way back to the opposite wall without being caught.
3. However, as the group creeps forward, the Giant may turn around at any time.
4. When this happens, the group must freeze. If the Giant sees any of the players move, those players must go back to the starting wall and begin again.
5. The person who succeeds in stealing the treasure and running back to the back wall with it becomes the new Giant. If the Giant catches anyone with the treasure before they get back to their baseline, they become the Giant's helpers and may do all the same moves as the Giant.
6. At a certain point, explore the possibility of teamwork. Stop the game and ask students, 'I wonder if there is a way that we could get the treasure to the back wall more quickly? How might we do this?' Elicit or suggest, 'Maybe if we worked together, passing the ball to a player further back …'
7. Play some more rounds using this cooperative technique.

Review

Ask students to identify some messages we can learn from this game. How did they make sure it was fair and friendly for everyone? How did they show cooperation? What did they do? What did they say?

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Level 1-2								
	Essential relationship skills	Respect and inclusion	Ethics and decision-making	Understanding Gender	Respect and safety in the digital world	Consent	Help - seeking	Gendered violence
Introductory activities	●	●	●					
TOPIC 1: Emotional literacy								
Activity 1: 'Emotions' statues	●							
Activity 2: Emotion triggers	●							
Activity 3: Acts of friendship	●	●	●					
Activity 4: Sharing stories about acts of kindness	●	●	●					
Activity 5: The Connections Game for a focus on friendly relationships	●	●						
TOPIC 2: Personal and Cultural Strengths								
Activity 1: The Traffic Lights Game for a focus on listening	●							
Activity 2: Strengths detectives	●							
Activity 3: Building a 'strengths' display	●							
Activity 4: Learning about respect from Aboriginal culture	●	●						
Activity 5: Knowing and showing respect	●	●	●	●		●		

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Level 1-2								
	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 2: Personal and Cultural Strengths								
Activity 6: Respecting and valuing difference	●	●		●		●		
Activity 7: The Anyone Who Game for a focus on similarities and differences	●	●						
TOPIC 3: Positive Coping								
Activity 1: 'Rock paper scissors' for a focus on turntaking	●							
Activity 2: Cheering up and calming down	●							
Activity 3: Facing fears	●						●	
Activity 4: Managing anger	●							
TOPIC 4: Problem Solving								
Activity 1: 'Let's work together' games for a focus on problem solving	●	●	●					
Activity 2: What can I do when I've got a problem?	●		●				●	
Activity 3: Real-world problem-solving	●		●				●	

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Level 1-2								
	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 5: Stress Management								
Activity 1: The Slow-motion Giant Mirror Game for creating a calmer classroom	●							
Activity 2: What is stress and what can we do to cope?	●							
Activity 3: Relaxation techniques	●							
Activity 4: Making new friends – from stress to strategies	●							
TOPIC 6: Help Seeking								
Activity 1: The Life Raft Game for a focus on helpseeking	●						●	
Activity 2: I can help my friends	●		●				●	
Activity 3: How do I ask for help?	●		●				●	
Activity 4: Who can I ask for help?	●						●	
TOPIC 7: Gender norms and stereotypes								
Activity 1: Identity – comparing personal preferences	●	●		●				
Activity 2: Labels are for jars, not for people	●	●		●				

Cross-referencing to catching on

Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Level 1-2								
	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 7: Gender norms and stereotypes								
Activity 3: What is fair play?	●	●	●	●		●		●
Activity 4: Ways to be gender fair	●	●	●	●		●		●
TOPIC 8: Positive Gender Relations								
Activity 1: What is violence? What is gender-based violence?	●			●		●		●
Activity 2: The opposite of violence is respect	●	●	●			●		●
Activity 3: What does it mean to ask, give or refuse consent?	●	●	●			●		●
Activity 4: Respect my body, respect my personal space	●	●	●			●		●
Activity 5: Some secrets should not be kept	●		●		●	●	●	●
Activity 6: Go, Tell – how to get help if someone abuses you	●		●		●	●	●	●

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