

Theme 2: Developing and maintaining relationships

Suggested content

Teacher notes

Mending fences

Effective communication

- communication of feelings
- accepting others' feelings
- causes of misunderstanding
- effective listening
- clarifying

This component can be linked into other school programs such as peer mediation or peer support programs.

Teachers can refer to the Child Protection Education materials on Protective Strategies (Theme 3) for support in this area. These materials focus specifically on *Trust, Talk and Take Control*.

Conflict resolution skills

- understanding conflict
- negotiation
- mediation

Since conflict is a constant part of life, students need strategies for solving those conflicts which commonly arise.

Dealing with difference

- tolerance and acceptance
- empathy
- barriers to understanding
- individual areas of sensitivity

This is an essential component for some groups of young people. Issues related to discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, marital status, disability (including HIV/AIDS), homosexuality, transgender and age need to be handled sensitively. Refer to *Resources for teaching against violence* (revised edition, 1996) for some ideas.

Relating to parents

Changing relationships

- rights and responsibilities of parents
- rights and responsibilities of senior students at home
- talking to parents
- listening to each other

As students come to the end of adolescence their relationships change and develop. They need to examine their rights and responsibilities at home and explore the concept of the “generation gap”. This is a time for examining values and developing a personal set of ethics. There needs to be discussion of why this is necessary and whether this is a single process, to be undertaken only once, or an ongoing process.

Values

- the right to a personal set of values
- respect for the values of others
- the importance of a code of conduct
- different values over time
- possible conflicts with parents' values
- shared values

Role-play some selected scenarios from a parent perspective. Identify skills such as active listening (e.g. listening from a parent's perspective and the student's perspective) and discuss the need to view both sides of the situation.

Relating to friends

Friendship in perspective

- qualities of a friend
- levels of friendship
- expectations of friendship
- rights in friendship
- responsibilities in friendship
- conflict with friends

Friendship means different things to different people at different times and in different environments. Discuss the different sorts of friendships that people have. Discuss jealousy and how it arises.

Discuss positive and negative aspects of friendship.

Relating to other important people

The influence of significant people

- identifying significant people
- relationships in the workplace
- relationships with teachers
- relationships in the community

Include student-teacher relationships and employer-employee relationships in this discussion of significant people. Other significant people may come from the media, music or sports.

Skills for positive relationships

- cooperation
- sharing
- dealing with mistakes
- resolving disputes
- seeking and receiving help
- humour and openness
- tolerance and respect

This list is not exhaustive.

Teachers could build on work covered in the Stage 5 Child Protection Education materials.

Power in relationships

Power

- sources of power
- positional power
- situational power
- rights and responsibilities of having power
- positive use of power

Power is the ability to influence others. It varies from situation to situation. Sometimes the person with the most knowledge has the power; at other times it is the person with the most support. Fame can give media stars great power.

Refer to the Stage 5 Child Protection Education materials on power in relationships for support.

Recognising abuse of power

- harassment
- bullying
- sources of power
- legal issues

Abuse of power is unhealthy for relationships. Consider issues of domestic violence, abuse of power at school, discrimination, harassment and vilification.

Gender and power

- the construction of gender
- gender and violence

It is important that students understand how power is linked to the construction of gender. How are dominant masculinities and femininities created?

See *Resources for Teaching Against Violence* (revised 1996) and *Girls and Boys at School: Gender Equity Strategy 1996-2001*.