CONTENT STRAND: HEALTH, WELLBEING AND RELATIONSHIPS

TOPIC 3
Developing respectful relationships

3.1 Overview
3.1.1 Introduction
Humans are social beings and feeling a sense of connectedness is essential to our wellbeing. Relationships are dynamic and complex and can be developed in various ways, such as online, face to face and/or by phone communication. The relationships you develop in your lifetime will have a significant influence in shaping your sense of self and identity. It is important to recognise that both positive and negative relationships have an impact on your wellbeing and happiness. The development of effective interpersonal skills will help you respond to both negative and positive situations appropriately and live a socially productive and rewarding life. Communication and mutual respect are both vital elements in developing and maintaining positive relationships.

Having a trusted support network is important throughout life. This network is made up of people such as family and friends, who can help you during difficult times. Having a support network enables you to feel a sense of belonging, self-worth and security, and contributes to your overall wellbeing.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
How can you empower yourself and others to develop and maintain positive relationships?
Why is it important to respond and act appropriately to negative interactions and relationships?
What skills and strategies can you use to support yourself and others in negative relationships?

SYLLABUS OUTCOMES
A student:
- examines and evaluates strategies to manage current and future challenges (PD4-1)
- examines and demonstrates the role help-seeking strategies and behaviours play in supporting themselves and others (PD4-2)
- investigates effective strategies to promote inclusivity, equality and respectful relationships (PD4-3)
- demonstrates self-management skills to effectively manage complex situations (PD4-9)
- applies and refines interpersonal skills to assist themselves and others to interact respectfully and promote inclusion in a variety of groups or contexts. (PD4-10)
3.2 Relationships

In this subtopic you will examine the many types of relationships you can have in your life, why these relationships are important and the different ways you relate to others depending on the type of relationship you share.

3.2.1 Connecting with others
Connecting with others and building strong relationship networks enhances our wellbeing. We rely on the people around us to help maintain balance in our lives. Each relationship you develop in your life will play a role in shaping your wellbeing. Relationships can benefit your wellbeing by lifting your self-esteem, encouraging you to live healthier, or even simply elevating your quality of life through positive interactions and activity.

During your childhood and early adolescence, your parents have a significant influence on your personal development through assisting you with important life choices. In the later stages of adolescence, your peer relationships may have a greater influence on the decisions you make; however, this doesn’t necessarily mean that other relationships become less meaningful at this time. Relationships change and transform over your entire life span and it is important that you take on board the valuable life lessons learned from each interaction.

It is important to have different types of relationships.

3.2.2 Types of relationships
Relationships can be quite complex and will change over time depending upon your life experiences. As we grow older we form more relationships in different settings. All of our relationships help to shape us as people. Your understanding of what you believe is right and wrong is shaped by your relationships and interactions with others. You feel a sense of belonging when you have a network of support around you. Feeling connected is about knowing you can seek support when you need it, that you will be listened to and that you can work together.

Family relationships
In most cases, family relationships provide the love, security and care that people need. As children, we rely heavily on our family for all our needs. Family members are generally dependable and trustworthy. As we grow older, family may play less of a role in our lives, although they are still very important in providing love, support and guidance.
Families are diverse — they come in all shapes and sizes. In the past when people thought of a typical family, they would generally think of a mum, a dad and children. Today, there are a variety of different family structures, all of which should provide a supportive and caring environment in which young people can grow up.

Different family structures include:

- a ‘nuclear’ family, where both parents live with their children
- a single-parent family
- a blended family, where each partner has children from previous relationships
- a same-sex parent family
- an extended family, where other members of the family (such as the grandparents) live with the family
- a foster parent family
- a carer who acts as a parent to the children, such as the Big Brothers Big Sisters program
- a couple-only family with no children or dependants.

Family relationships do change during adolescence. As you become more independent, you are less likely to rely on your parents for the guidance they gave you when you were younger. This is a period of transition for both you and your parents and there may be some conflict about different expectations and responsibilities during this time. Your family is an important influence in helping you build confidence, self-belief and optimism during this time. Your parents will continue to be a source of care and emotional support no matter what is going on in your life. Despite the many changes and challenges that you will be required to deal with during adolescence, your family will generally continue to provide you with a sense of security.

What classifies as a family is different for each individual because family situations vary depending upon life events. It is best not to define a family by what it looks like but rather by what it does. Families are caring, supportive and loving.

There are a variety of family structures. All of them have the potential to provide a supportive and caring environment for children and young people.
Friendships
Increasingly during adolescence, a young person’s peer group becomes a significant source of support. For some young people, making friends takes effort and can be a hard thing to do, particularly if you are a shy person. If you find it difficult to make friends, try to be yourself, be genuine and respectful of others and friendships will usually result. Making the effort is well worth it; friends can help you during difficult times as well as enjoy the good times with you. It is important to form friendships and show willingness to be a friend who can be trusted and relied upon. Young people are at times more comfortable sharing information about their lives, thoughts and feelings with trusted peers rather than adults.

Our friends start to influence us significantly during adolescence. For example, they can influence:
- how we dress
- our attitudes
- how we act
- decisions
- actions
- what we like to do
- how we feel about ourselves.

Peers provide a reference point for information and opportunities for understanding the world outside the influence of family. Dating, social events, dress, alcohol and drug use, sport and hobbies and other decisions take place in the company of peers. Peers are a critical part of an adolescent’s transition to being independent outside the family.

Close and intimate relationships
Developing relationships with very close friends who you trust is important during adolescence. You may also have intimate relationships that feel like more than close friendships, where you are physically attracted to another person. Each of us should make our own decision about whether we want to have a relationship that involves romance.

Some young people choose to be ‘single’ because they are not ready for such a close relationship. Other young people become attracted to someone of the opposite sex. Some find themselves attracted to a person of the same sex.

Young people have different ideas about what they want from a relationship. For some young people, friendship, closeness, romance and love are the important factors. Some people treat intimacy with less importance — not so much as part of a relationship but more as a chance to be sexually active. Problems can result when people have different ideas about the significance of a relationship.
Online relationships
As your friends become an increasingly influential source of support during adolescence, so too increases the amount of time you spend communicating with them online. Since the arrival of social networking sites, research has shown that communicating with peers is the most popular use of technology during adolescence. Research also suggests that adolescents access social networking forums to help deal with issues in their lives. The good news is that most adolescents use social networking sites to communicate with people they already know from offline contexts and are making good choices about the personal information that they post in their profiles.

The internet allows us to make contact with people who have similar interests through a variety of online forums and social networking sites. Chatting and interacting online can be a great way to keep up to date easily and instantaneously with your network of friends; however, it can also reduce the amount of important face-to-face contact necessary to maintain a friendship. Social networking sites can also have an influence on the types of discussions that take place during face-to-face contact time. You may find yourself talking to your friends about their online profiles rather than really catching up with what is going on in their lives.

The impact of the online world in developing and maintaining relationships is infinite but one of the most important things to remember in our dealings in this online environment, as in the offline world, is to treat other people the way that you like to be treated.

The eSafety and Being safe on the internet weblinks in the Resources tab offers some advice about things to remember when developing friendships online.

Support networks
Having a support network is essential in helping you through difficult situations that may arise. It may consist of your family, friends, teachers, counsellor and others. A support network gives you the comfort of knowing that there is help and guidance available if you need it. Having a support network will enable you to feel a sense of belonging, self-worth and security.

3.2 Activities
Recipe for relationships
1. (a) Using the tables on the following pages, create a ‘recipe’ of five ingredients/characteristics you consider to be most important for the people indicated. You may wish to use some of the characteristics provided when putting together your ‘recipes for relationships’.
   (b) Complete the tables by outlining a reason why you consider those ingredients/characteristics to be the most important.
### Characteristics

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### Parent(s)

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Significant other (sports coach, teacher, etc.)

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Support networks

For young people, feeling connected and supported by peers and adults is essential to their overall wellbeing and ability to flourish as an individual. It is easier to deal with life’s challenges if you can access and get advice from trusted people within your support network.

2. Develop a mind map that encapsulates who you would consider to be part of your support network. Use the template below as a basis for your mind map.

3. Describe a particular situation/circumstance when you would rely on the support of:
   (a) your family
   (b) your friends
   (c) a significant other.

4. Explain why you would access that particular person and not someone else with regard to the situation/circumstance you have identified.
How can I develop my support network?

Having strategies to develop and maintain our support networks is important.

5. Use the Support networks weblink in the Resources tab to create a pamphlet or website to provide strategies for students to develop and maintain support networks.

What we have in common

Friendships start with a connection.

6. Copy and complete the Venn diagram below to explore the similarities, connections and differences between you and a friend.

```
Me
(name)

Friend
(name)
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3.2 Check and challenge

Explain

1. Explain what is meant by the statement ‘families are very diverse’.
2. Describe how young people’s relationships with their parents start to change when they reach adolescence.
3. Describe the factors that can influence our relationships with our peers.
4. What are the qualities of a good friend?

Elaborate

5. Suggest some ways that you could positively manage the changing relationship that you have with your parent/s or carer/s.
6. Why are support networks important? Provide examples of times when support networks may be needed during high school.

Evaluate

7. Evaluate what identifies a family.
8. Describe how your family or the people who care for you provide you with support.
3.3 The ways we relate and communicate

You have many different types of relationships with many different types of people. Despite their differences, the common aspect of all positive relationships is the need to be treated fairly and with respect. In what ways are each of the relationships in your life different?

3.3.1 Effective communication

The way we relate to people in our social network differs depending on the nature of the relationship. You will generally communicate quite differently in a conversation with your teacher compared with a discussion with your mum or dad. Despite this, effective communication in any context is an essential aspect of developing positive relationships. Effective communication is about the way we talk and listen; it is also about our body language. We can all learn how to improve the way we communicate and identify the most appropriate and respectful way to relate to each other depending on the situation.

Different types of behaviour are considered to be acceptable depending on the nature of the relationship. Even though some of your teachers may be of a similar age to your parents or other adult relatives, you do not behave in the same way towards your teachers as you do towards your family. You may also find that you relate differently to the same people when you are in a different situation. The way you behave is influenced by the behaviour the people around you use, or teach you to use. Who do you think has an influence on the way you behave in your relationships?

3.3.2 Relating — is it all the same?

As children, our parents, teachers and other adults teach us about appropriate behaviour, including being respectful to others. Throughout our lives we continue to learn how to relate in different ways. The situation and who the other person is will influence how you relate to them. Think about how you relate to your friends compared with how you relate to your parents or teachers, and then factor in where you might be, such as in the playground, at home, in the classroom or out in public. How we behave can be appropriate in some relationships but not in others, and it may be appropriate in some situations but not in others. For example:

- It may be okay to hug and kiss your parents each day but not your teacher.
- It may be okay to hold your partner’s hand outside of school but not in class.
- It is okay to laugh and muck around with your friends at lunchtime but not in class.
- It is okay to voice your opinion but not if you are putting someone else down by doing it.
- It is okay to have more power than someone else but it is not okay to abuse that power.

3.3.3 What influences the way we relate to people?

Have you ever thought about what type of relationship you want with your parents, family and friends? Most people want to be treated fairly and with respect. They want to have happy relationships in which they feel comfortable to be who they are and are accepted, needed and loved.
We all relate in different ways. How we get on with others, how we express our thoughts and feelings in relationships, our expectations of what we want and need, and how we treat others and want to be treated in relationships are influenced by a range of factors, including our:

- personality
- family
- parents’ influence
- previous experience of relationships
- culture and religion
- age and level of maturity
- peer influence
- intelligence
- gender.

Think about how you relate to others and what influences the way you relate. Do you find it easy talking about what you are thinking or what you are feeling? Are you confident in relating to different people in different situations? Are you encouraged by your family to say what you think? The factors listed above will influence how you answer these questions.

3.3.4 The importance of communication

No matter how well you know a person, you cannot read their mind. We need to communicate clearly to avoid misunderstandings. Open, clear and effective communication can be learned. We communicate and express ourselves both verbally and non-verbally. We can say a lot without speaking. Our posture, tone of voice and the expressions on our face all convey a message. Non-verbal communication ultimately determines how genuine the conversation is. It is important that what you are saying reflects your feelings and emotions.

**Listening skills**

Listening is a very important part of effective communication. When you do not adopt effective listening skills you are not effectively communicating and are hampering the opportunity to develop positive relationships. Have you ever mindlessly responded with ‘uh huh’ when someone was trying to tell you something and you have had to ask them to repeat the question? Have you ever been on the other side of the conversation when you have had someone respond in such a manner to your conversation? It is important to take the time to actively listen. Listening takes work and it improves our communication.
If we want our communication skills to get stronger it is crucial to adopt good listening skills.

- Give the conversation your full attention and concentrate on what the other person is saying.
- Allow the person to completely finish their thought or sentence before you begin to form a response and wait a moment before you begin to reply.
- Keep eye contact.
- Show genuine interest.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Respond in an active constructive way.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The importance of communication skills cannot be underestimated. Good communication skills are necessary in all aspects of your life.

### 3.3 Activities

**Speed communicating and listening**

1. (a) Arrange a single line of desks in the middle of the room with a chair on either side of the desk so that pairs of students face each other, or organise students sitting in two circles on the floor in the classroom with the students on the inner circle facing the students on the outer circle.

(b) Each ‘pair’ must communicate with no-one other than their partner for two minutes (timed by the teacher).

The aim is for each student to ‘get to know’ the person opposite them as best they can in the allocated time.

Remember that verbal and non-verbal communication and listening skills are all equally important in this activity. Conversations should be ‘two-way’. Consider the following starting questions if you are struggling for ideas:

- ‘Do you have brothers/sisters?’
- ‘Do you have pets?’
- ‘What are your favourite hobbies?’
- ‘What is the best thing that you have ever got away with?’

(c) At the end of the two minutes your teacher can randomly ask a student to tell the rest of the class as much as they can remember about the person they just finished having a discussion with.

(d) Next, one partner stays where they are and the other moves one seat to their right (or the number of moves to the right can be determined by the teacher) and a new two-minute conversation starts. Continue this process until all students have been paired with each other, or as long as time allows.

(e) At the end of the activity your teacher may like to ask each student to identify the most interesting point made by any other student that they spoke to.

2. Reflect on this activity by answering the following questions.

- (a) What behaviours or actions made you feel like you were being listened to?
- (b) What behaviours or actions made you feel like you weren’t being listened to?
- (c) What are some strategies that you can use to make sure that your information was conveyed effectively?
Relating and communicating word cloud

3. Use the Wordle or WordItOut weblinks in the Resources tab to create a word cloud that shows what you believe are the most important aspects of the way we relate and communicate.
   - Type in all of the words you can think of and remember to type the words that you believe are the most important a number of times so that they are created the boldest and largest.
   - You might like to combine all of the words that are important to each student to develop a class word cloud. The words that are common for a number of students will be identified as large, bold text in the class word cloud.
   - Compare the class word cloud to your individual word cloud. Are there any similarities and/or differences?

3.3 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Describe the factors that can influence our relationships.
2. Access the Active listening weblink in the Resources tab to reflect on the following questions.
   - We hear what is being said but are we really listening? What is listening?

Elaborate
3. How do your parents influence how you relate to other people?
4. Are there any similarities or differences in the ways boys and girls relate to their friends? What might be some reasons for these similarities and differences?
5. What are the three main ways that we communicate and relate to others?

Evaluate
6. Describe any changes that have occurred in the way you relate to your friends now that you are in high school compared with when you were in primary school. What do you think are the reasons for these changes?

Resources
- Weblink: Wordle
- Weblink: WordItOut
- Weblink: Active listening
3.4 Positive and respectful relationships

In this subtopic you will explore characteristics of positive relationships and learn how to establish caring and respectful relationships with others, including your friends and family.

3.4.1 Building relationships for happiness and belonging

Fostering positive relationships is important in every aspect of our lives — at school, at home, at work and on the sporting field. Positive and meaningful relationships provide us with the greatest happiness. Almost everyone feels happier when they are in the company of others and it is an essential element of our social wellbeing that we make friends and establish positive and respectful relationships that provide us with a sense of belonging.

Healthy relationships are built on respect. Respecting other people’s feelings, their right to be safe and their right to express their thoughts and opinions and who they are will create positive relationships. It is important that both people in a relationship do these things so each person feels happy and safe in that relationship. How do you show someone that you respect their opinion even if it differs from your own?

3.4.2 What is a positive relationship?

How do you know if your relationship with someone is positive or not? To help you identify whether a relationship is positive for you, think about how you feel and how you are treated in the relationship.

Characteristics of a positive relationship

- Makes you feel loved and needed
- Allows you to be yourself
- Supportive
- Happy
- Safe and secure
- Involves good communication—listening to each other
- Allows different opinions
- Trust and respect
- Makes you feel good about yourself

Makes you feel loved and needed
Allows you to be yourself
Supportive
Happy
Safe and secure
Involves good communication—listening to each other
Allows different opinions
Trust and respect
Makes you feel good about yourself
3.4.3 Rights and responsibilities in relationships

Arriving at a point in a relationship where both people feel happy and respected is not always easy. Sometimes, the differences between people get in the way, and people don’t know how to deal with them effectively.

Everybody has **rights** in relationships, such as the right to feel safe and express their own opinions. Just as everyone has rights, they also have **responsibilities**, such as not threatening or harming other people.

Recognising that each person has rights and responsibilities in a relationship and learning what these are is an important step in learning how to develop and maintain positive relationships.

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<td>To be considerate of other people’s feelings</td>
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<td>To listen</td>
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<td>To be able to express thoughts, feelings and needs freely</td>
<td>To accept others’ right to have an opinion or different point of view</td>
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<td>To be respected</td>
<td>To respect the other person’s needs</td>
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<td>To say no</td>
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<td>To respect the other person’s feelings</td>
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<td>To make your own decisions</td>
<td>Not to put others down</td>
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<td>To be free to spend time with others</td>
<td>Not to harm others</td>
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3.4.4 Negotiating respectful relationships

In developing relationships, it is important to think about what you want and need in the relationship. Different people want different things from relationships. Compromising your needs to keep someone else happy or to avoid an argument is not what healthy relationships are about. Caring and respectful relationships are those in which both people have their rights respected.
Here are some ways that you can foster respect and improve your relationships:

- Listen to the other person when they want to tell you their thoughts or feelings about something.
- Try to understand their point of view.
- Remember that they have a right to have different opinions, so don’t interrupt or judge them if you don’t agree with them.
- Don’t put down the other person.
- Provide support when they need it and accept their support when you need it.
- Express your needs in a calm way, explaining clearly what you need without being aggressive. Avoid losing your temper — take a deep breath, count to 10 and calm down.
- Talk about the situation when there are differences. Listen to each other’s needs and try to compromise so you both feel your needs are being met.
- Sometimes when there are differences in opinions or feelings, you will need to appreciate the differences and agree to disagree about some things.
- Make sure there is a balance of give and take in the relationship.
- Be honest and don’t tell lies or mislead someone, even if you are worried about what the person may think of you.
- Develop trust in the relationship by being dependable and supportive.

### 3.4 Activities

#### Developing positive friendships

One of the most important aspects of your development is fostering positive friendships.

1. Use the My Great Big Adventure weblink in the Resources tab and click on the ‘Friendship’ link to watch an episode on this topic.
2. Complete the following sentences.
   (a) I am a good friend because …
   (b) I could be a better friend if …

#### Respectful relationships

3. In pairs, use the What makes a good friend? weblink in the Resources tab to research information on adolescent relationships. Using the information from your research, design and create an information sheet on adolescence and relationships. Your information sheet should be targeted at young people. Discuss with your partner what sort of information would help young people to find their way through a relationship. You may wish to focus on relationships in general, friendships, intimate relationships or family relationships. The following questions are a guide.
   - What makes a positive relationship?
   - What relationships are important to young people?
   - How can you recognise when a relationship is unhealthy?
   - What are some strategies for negotiating respectful relationships?

#### Physical activity and relationships

Participating in a group activity is one way in which we learn to relate to others in positive and respectful ways. In games like dodge ball and 40:40 there are official rules to help us to play the game fairly and show us what is and isn’t acceptable behaviour. There are also unwritten expectations and responsibilities of fair play.

4. In groups of four, design a new and creative game for the class to participate in. You will need to write a plan and identify:
   (a) the equipment you need
   (b) the instructions for the class
   (c) the official rules of the game
   (d) a list of unwritten expectations of fair play.

5. After the class has participated in each game, discuss the following questions as a whole group.
   (a) Were there any moments of fair play shown?
   (b) Did you hear any words of encouragement from either team during the game?
   (c) How did people relate and communicate with each other during the game? Provide specific examples.
(d) Were the official rules ever broken?
(e) Did you notice anything else worth mentioning in relation to positive and respectful participation?
(f) How does participation in a team sport help you to develop positive and respectful relationships?
(g) How do people feel when players are not positive and respectful?
(h) What is the most important aspect of participating in a team sport?

Rights and responsibilities
6. As a class, discuss the rights and responsibilities listed in table 3.1. Add to the table any other rights and responsibilities that the class identifies.
7. Make a list of the:
   (a) behaviours that show respect for others’ needs and feelings
   (b) behaviours that help to make others feel safe.

Understanding rights and responsibilities
8. (a) In groups of four, brainstorm the rights and responsibilities that:
   • students have in the classroom
   • young people have at home.
   (b) Write your group’s ideas under the following headings.
   • Classroom rights
   • Classroom responsibilities
   • Home rights
   • Home responsibilities
9. As a group, discuss the following questions.
   (a) How do you feel when your rights are not being respected by others?
   (b) Imagine yourself as a parent. How would you feel if your son/daughter did not stick to the curfew you had both agreed on?
   (c) As a student, how would you feel if a classmate left all the work to you in a paired class assignment?
   (d) What strategies could you use to negotiate a better outcome to the situation in part c?
   (e) Why is it important to respect others’ rights?

Resources
Weblink: My Great Big Adventure
Weblink: What makes a good friend?

3.4 Check and challenge
Explain
1. What are the characteristics of a positive relationship?
2. Identify the characteristics in a caring and respectful relationship.
3. Identify examples of things that different people might want from a relationship.
4. Identify what is important to you in your friendships.

Elaborate
5. Why are some relationships stressful or hard?
6. Imagine that you and three other people have been stranded on a desert island. Think of three ways in which the relationships between the four of you might be tested. Then suggest a list of rules to maintain respectful relationships on the island.

Evaluate
7. How can you improve the way in which you relate to others so your relationships are happy and respectful?
3.5 Power in relationships

In this subtopic you will explore power in relationships. You will learn what power is used for and how people can use the personal power they have in relationships to either help or hurt others.

3.5.1 An even balance of power
Positive relationships require an even balance of power where both people’s opinions are equally respected and valued. This allows for the aspects of a caring relationship, such as trust, empathy, conflict resolution and negotiation. An uneven balance of power can lead to negative and destructive relationships. It is very important that there is a mutual sense of understanding, respect and communication so that no member of the relationship will feel excluded or taken advantage of.

Everyone has some power in their relationships. When people use their power to control or hurt someone else, the relationship is abusive. People can have power in relationships because they:

• are bigger and stronger
• are more popular
• have authority in their job or position
• know more things
• know someone important or who has more power
• are older
• have expertise
• are more attractive.

Think about a relationship you know of in which one person has more power because they are popular. Does responsibility come with popularity?

3.5.2 Positive use of power in relationships
Power can be used in positive ways that respect and care for others. When we use our power in relationships in a positive way, our relationships will become stronger. This means that not only will our actions make others feel good in the short term, but the relationship will continue long into the future. Some examples of positive use of power are shown in the figures on the next page. A balanced relationship embraces people’s differences and helps nurture mutual respect.

3.5.3 Being balanced in yourself
Being balanced in yourself involves taking responsibility for your own feelings and needs while still allowing close connections and respecting the needs of others. It would be ideal if everyone grew up valuing everyone else’s needs as equal to their own, but unfortunately this does not always happen. For this reason, it is essential to be assertive about your own needs in a relationship. Being assertive is not about being aggressive, it is feeling the confidence to share your point of view and staying true to your values. A willingness to also compromise sometimes enables bonds to be strengthened between people; however, if you are making compromises too frequently and being non-assertive in your communication, then you may be neglecting your needs. A balance of give and take is imperative.
Positive uses of power

- Care for a sick family member.
- Help your elderly grandparents around their home.
- Stand up for a friend when they are bullied.
- Walk your younger sister home from school.
- Include all peers in group activities.
- Support a friend in a time of need.
- Help a classmate who is less skilled in a particular activity during a PE class.

3.5.4 The balance of power

In positive relationships, there is a positive balance of power. This means both people feel free to be who they are and express their thoughts and feelings because their opinions will be met with respect. Both people feel they have equal control over the decisions that are made. Being respectful of the other person’s feelings, their right to be heard and their right to feel safe will ensure a balance of power is maintained.

Boy or girl — who has the power?

Gender stereotypes can influence the balance of power in relationships. Generally, the way in which boys and girls are expected to behave is different. These gender stereotypes can influence boys’ and girls’ beliefs about how they should behave in relationships. Boys sometimes think they should be in control in a relationship. This can result in an imbalance of power in relationships between boys and girls where girls are not respected. Positive relationships are about mutual respect and equality.
### 3.5 Activities

**Appropriate use of personal power**

1. (a) In small groups, read the following scenarios. Identify who has the power in each relationship and why. Discuss ways in which the power could use their power in a positive way.

   Every day at school, Alex is bullied by his peers because he is gay. He is really depressed and scared, particularly when he is walking home from school. Tony is a popular athlete in Alex’s year. He understands what Alex must be going through because he has supported his cousin through a similar situation.

   Jamie dropped out of school at the end of Year 10. She is now 18 years old and has never managed to get a job. All her friends have finished their HSC and are in full-time jobs. Her best friend, Jessica, is bright and has always been more motivated to achieve; she currently has a part-time job and is studying at TAFE. Jamie doesn’t know how to get out of the negative cycle she is in. She is feeling down and is bored with her life.

   (b) Choose one scenario and role-play the situation in front of the class so the use of power contributes positively to the relationship. Alternatively, devise your own scenario and role-play it. As a class, discuss each group’s role play and determine how power was used and how it contributed to positive relationships.

**Influences on power**

2. Identify how each of the following influences has a positive and/or negative effect on power in relationships.

   - Intolerance
   - Prejudice
   - Bias
   - Knowledge
   - Ethics
   - Self-esteem

**Communication role plays — non-assertive, aggressive and assertive**

Learning to be assertive in a way that means that everyone’s needs are understood and valued equally is an essential skill in developing positive relationships.

3. Work in groups of three to act out the following role play scenarios and complete the discussion questions.

   **(a) Non-assertive role play scenario**

   Act out the following scene demonstrating non-assertive communication. One student will be communicating non-assertively and the other two students should be persistent but not overly aggressive in their communication. Two classmates are pestering a third classmate to let them cheat from his/her paper during a test. The third classmate does not want to let them cheat and responds in a non-assertive manner to the other two classmates’ demands to let them cheat.

   **Discussion questions**
   
   i. What did the non-assertive communication look like, sound like and feel like?
   ii. Was there a positive or negative outcome? Why?
   iii. How did the non-assertive student feel during the scenario?
   iv. How did the other two students feel during the scenario?

   **(b) Aggressive role play scenario**

   Act out the following scene demonstrating aggressive communication.

   Two classmates are pestering a third classmate to let them cheat from his/her paper during a test. The third classmate does not want to let them cheat and responds aggressively towards the other two classmates’ requests to let them cheat. The two other classmates become aggressive in response.

   **Discussion questions**
   
   i. Was there a positive or negative outcome? Why?
   ii. How did each of the students feel during the scenario?
   iii. Why do you think aggressive communication causes an aggressive response?
   iv. Why don’t aggressive forms of communication work?
(c) Assertive role play scenario
Act out the following scene demonstrating assertive communication.
Two classmates are pestering a third classmate to let them cheat from his/her paper during a test. The third classmate does not want to let them cheat and responds assertively to the other two classmates’ requests to let them cheat. The other two classmates back down in response.

Discussion questions
i. Was the outcome to this scenario positive or negative? Why?
ii. What are the benefits of using assertive communication to express your point of view?

4. Think about the following scenarios and identify the most effective way to respond to the situation in order to achieve a positive outcome.
- Your friends are trying to get you to go to a party that you don’t really want to go to and they insist that if you are a true friend, you will go. How will you handle this situation?
- You agree to meet some of your friends at the station in the morning to travel together to school. You wait for 20 minutes after the agreed meeting time. You come to the conclusion that they are not coming, catch the next train and end up being late for school. How will you deal with this situation when you see your friends at school during the day?
- Your friends are being particularly mean to another student who is not part of your friendship group. You feel uncomfortable with their behaviour and want them to stop. How will you negotiate this?

Am I in a healthy relationship?
5. Use the Am I in a healthy relationship weblink in the Resources tab to create a checklist for young people to use when determining whether a relationship is positive and healthy.

3.5 Check and challenge
Explain
1. Describe how boys and girls behave when they are with a group of friends who are the same sex compared with when they are with friends of the opposite sex.
2. Explain the reasons why there are differences in behaviours between boys and girls.
3. What is meant by the term ‘power’ in relationships? Provide some examples.
4. What makes a respectful relationship? How is respect developed and maintained?
5. What personal skills are necessary in order to assist with developing balance in a relationship?

Elaborate
6. What is the difference between positive use of power and abuse of power?
7. Explain a scenario that shows a positive use of power and one that shows an abuse of power.
3.6 Bullying and harassment

Bullying is an abuse of power and causes great harm to others. In this subtopic you will explore types of bullying, why someone might use their power to bully others and why some people are more likely to be the targets of bullying.

3.6.1 What is bullying and harassment?

Bullying and harassment can happen anywhere at any time. Many teenagers experience bullying and can be subject to unfair behaviour, which can lead to serious emotional scarring and a negative impact on their self-identity. It is important to prevent these behaviours before they start or get out of hand. Bullying and harassment are often thought of separately; however, both involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of ‘difference’. These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age, marital status, parenting status or economic status.

3.6.2 Bullying and harassment — what is the difference?

**Bullying** behaviours are deliberate and hurtful. Bullying can happen to anyone. Bullying is classified as a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social taunting that generally comes from a person with greater power. The intent of bullying is to cause harm, hurt or fear.

**Harassment** is a behaviour that aims to offend, humiliate or intimidate a group or individual. It can be a one-off occurrence or it can be repeated.

Both bullying and harassment:
- can be done directly (for example, face to face) or indirectly (such as via mobiles or the internet)
- may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge
- have an element of threat
- can continue over time and are premeditated
- are often hidden from adults
- may be sustained if adults or peers do not take action.

3.6.3 Types of bullying and harassment

There are many types of bullying and harassment, including:
- physical — hitting, kicking, pinching
- verbal — name-calling, teasing
- psychological — standover tactics, threats
- social — social exclusion, rumours, putdowns
- sexual — physical, verbal or non-verbal sexual conduct
- cyber — using the internet, texting, email and other digital technologies.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

A common type of bullying is ‘covert’ bullying. This type of bullying is subtle and non-physical, and usually not noticed by people outside of the situation. Covert bullying often damages an individual’s self-esteem, reputation and peer relationships using things like exclusion, rumours, intimidation and social media. Due to its discreet nature, covert bullying can continue for long periods before others become aware of it.
Bullying can be physical. Bullying can happen via technology.

Sexual harassment

The Australian Human Rights Commission defines sexual harassment as any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Sexual harassment may include:

- staring or leering
- unwelcome touching
- suggestive or insulting remarks
- sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- inappropriate advances on social networking sites
- accessing sexually explicit internet sites.

Despite there being laws against it, sexual harassment continues to occur. Each person has the right to be free from harassment and we all have the responsibility to treat others in a way that we would like to be treated. The principle of mutual respect is essential in maintaining healthy and happy school communities.
Homophobic and transphobic bullying

Most young people experience strong feelings or attractions for other people during adolescence. Some have these feelings and attractions for people of the same sex and identify as being gay or lesbian. Young people who are same-sex attracted, or who are thought to be same-sex attracted, are sometimes the targets of bullies and are abused and harassed.

**Homophobic bullying** is based on discrimination against people who are, or who are thought to be, same-sex attracted. **Homophobia** is the fear or dislike of people who are homosexual (same-sex attracted). You are not born homophobic, just as you are not born racist. These are learned behaviours that are based on ignorance and prejudice.

**Transphobic bullying** is based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about transgender individuals. That is individuals whose gender is not the same as, or who do not identify with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

How are they different?

Homophobic bullying targets someone’s sexual orientation (whether they are, or are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual), whereas transphobic bullying targets someone because of their gender identity (whether they identify as male, female or something different, regardless of the gender they were assigned at birth) or because they do not ‘conform’ to traditional gender stereotypes.

It is important to recognise the difference between ‘gender identity’ and ‘sex orientation’, as a person’s gender identity alone does not tell us anything about their sexual orientation.

There are sometimes stereotypes in schools; boys who are not sporty or who like to read, do drama or dance are sometimes teased for being ‘gay’. They don’t fit the gender stereotype for boys so they are labelled as ‘gay’ and are bullied and harassed.

The 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health (conducted in 2013) found that 6 per cent of students are attracted to those of the same sex and 11 per cent expressed attraction for both genders; however, in 2008 only 1 per cent of students identified as same-sex attracted. This change suggests that positive progress has been made in terms of accepting diversity in our community and young gay people are beginning to feel more comfortable about coming out.

You can help stop homophobia and transphobia in your school by:

- not ignoring it and speaking up for people who are being bullied
- telling an adult who can help
- not assuming everyone is heterosexual
- not thinking that same-sex attracted people are less worthy than other people
- thinking about your own behaviours and the language you use. Many young people use the word ‘gay’ as a put-down — this is a form of homophobia
- challenging homophobic violence
- respecting the right of all people to be safe
- remembering that it is okay to have a range of interests and to express yourself in a range of ways; for example, it is okay for boys to learn to dance and for girls to do metalwork.
Cyberbullying
Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs via technology rather than face to face. For example, cyberbullying can occur using the internet and mobile phones. This type of bullying is a significant issue among adolescents and can contribute to mental health issues.

DID YOU KNOW?
Cyberbullying is constantly evolving and changing as new technology and social media sites are introduced. Cyberbullying has expanded the boundary of bullying to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ON Resources
Weblink: Cyberbullying
Weblink: Strategies for dealing with cyberbullying

### 3.6.4 Why young people bully
People who bully come in all shapes and sizes, and they bully for many different reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons young people may bully others</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To impress others</td>
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<tr>
<td>To fit in with the crowd or their peer group</td>
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<tr>
<td>To compensate for having few or no friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>To entertain themselves and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get revenge</td>
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<tr>
<td>To feel more powerful than other people</td>
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<tr>
<td>To gain more power</td>
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DID YOU KNOW?
It might surprise you to know that many famous and successful people were bullied when they were teenagers. Celebrities including Tom Cruise, Lady Gaga, Harrison Ford, Miley Cyrus, Pierce Brosnan and Tyra Banks have all acknowledged that they were victims of bullying.
3.6.5 The effects of bullying

Young people who are bullied are affected in many ways. The emotional impact of bullying can be devastating. It can influence a person’s physical health if they feel stressed and unwell. No-one likes to be put down, threatened or abused. As a result of bullying, young people:

- are often scared
- can feel isolated and alone
- can feel worthless and have low self-esteem
- can avoid going to school
- feel anxious and worried
- can become depressed.

Different roles in a student bullying scenario

There are three main roles within a bullying scenario:

1. the victim or target — the person on the end of the hurtful behaviour
2. the bully — the person causing the bullying behaviour
3. the bystander/s — a person or people that are aware that there is a bullying situation occurring but are not directly involved in it.

3.6.6 How to change from being a bystander to an ‘upstander’

Use the Bullying: what can I do and where can I go? weblink in the Resources tab to watch the video by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg giving advice on how to empower yourself to deal with a bullying situation. Dr Carr-Gregg says that ‘Bullies feel in control when they threaten or frighten others, and they feel admired by other students’.

Unfortunately, bystanders who do nothing about this situation can actually make the situation worse. Bystanders are generally present around 87 per cent of the time, and when the bystanders are silent, the bullying behaviour continues. As a bystander, you are part of the problem if you are not part of the solution.

Most young people feel uncomfortable about speaking out on bullying because they feel personally vulnerable in the situation. It is important that you develop some strategies to change from being a bystander to an upstander in order to make a positive difference to the bullying situation.

Use the Bullying: what can I do if I see it happening? weblink in the Resources tab to watch a video by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg giving advice on how to become an ‘upstander’ rather than a bystander. Dr Carr-Gregg offers five successful techniques that a bystander can use to positively resolve a bullying situation.

1. Distracting — changing the topic of conversation
2. Balancing — using a positive comment when someone who is bullying says something negative to put someone down
3. Reasoning — helping the student who bullies to think and not just react
4. Supporting — saying something supportive to the person being bullied or giving them a positive gesture
5. Getting help — going to an adult or person in authority and making them aware of the bullying
3.6.7 You have a right to be and feel safe at school

Everyone has the right to feel safe at school and everyone is responsible for stopping bullying. Your school has the responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for all students in its care. This is an environment that is free of bullying and intimidation. If you see someone in your school being bullied, you also have a responsibility to try to stop it. When you experience bullying or witness others being bullied, it can affect how you feel about yourself and it can affect your learning. There are skills and strategies that you can learn and use to ensure your safety and the safety of others. It is vital that everyone within your school community works together to ensure that everyone at school feels safe and free from bullying.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Take a Stand Together app is an app for Apple iOS and Android devices that gives tips and advice about bullying.

### 3.6 Activities

**Song reflection**

1. Use the [Caught in the crowd](#) weblink in the Resources tab to listen to this song by Kate Miller-Heidke and respond to the following questions.
   a. Write a journal entry as if you are Kate Miller-Heidke. Elaborate on her thoughts reflecting on her time at school.
   b. What was Kate’s role in the bullying incident at her school?
   c. What would Kate have done differently if she was at school now?
   d. How did the song make you feel?
   e. Describe the experiences you have had with bullying.
   f. What is your attitude to bullying and what has happened in your life to make you feel this way?

2. Design your own cartoon strip about a bullying incident that results in a positive outcome. The cartoon should identify the bullying incident and outline the cause and strategies to resolve the issue positively. You can use an online comic strip maker or other tool to create eight frames.

3. Write your own song or poem about the topic of bullying.

**Bullying can happen to anyone in any manner**

4. Use the [My Great Big Adventure](#) weblink in the Resources tab to watch the bullying animation (select the ‘Bullying’ link at the top of the page).

5. Write down examples of bullying that you have been aware of. Explain why you think they developed and how they made you feel at the time. Did they have a positive or negative resolution?

6. Use the [My Great Big Adventure](#) weblink in the Resources tab to watch the Tim Pocock interview (select the ‘Bullying’ link at the top of the page, then select the Tim Pocock link below the animation screen). Answer the following questions.
   a. How did the interview make you feel?
   b. Why didn’t Tim’s friends help him at the time?
   c. How did Tim deal with the situation at the time?
   d. What support did Tim’s parents provide?
   e. How has the experience affected the way Tim approaches life now?
Prevention strategies

7. Access the **Cybersafety quiz** and **Cybersafety #GameOn** weblinks in the Resources tab to watch the video and learn more about staying safe online.

8. Consider the types of problems that could arise when you and your friends interact using the internet. Gather all of the problems that the whole class has thought of and then devise some prevention strategies and/or solutions to each of the problems.

Taking action

9. Access the **Being safe online** weblink in the Resources tab to learn more about online safety.

10. In groups, create a website to educate students about the importance of online safety and wellbeing.

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**3.6 Check and challenge**

**Explain**

1. Explain why bullying happens.
2. Explain how bullying affects people.
3. Identify strategies to help others who are being bullied or harassed.

**Elaborate**

4. Identify the barriers to stopping or reporting bullying and harassment. Suggest some strategies to overcome these barriers.

**Evaluate**

Use the **ReachOut: cyberbullying** and **Cyberbullying — get help** weblinks in the Resources tab to answer questions 5 and 6.

5. What is cyberbullying and what does it look like?
6. What are some things you should do if you are being cyberbullied? How can you help a friend who is being bullied online?

**Weblink:** ReachOut: cyberbullying
**Weblink:** Cyberbullying — get help
3.7 Negative relationships

In this subtopic you will explore negative relationships. These occur when one person uses their power in a relationship negatively. Their actions may cause physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm to another person, or may be abusive due to neglect.

3.7.1 Recognising a negative relationship

We all encounter negative relationships at some stage in our lives; however, it is when relationships become abusive and beyond our ability to control that we need to employ different measures to ensure our safety.

People who relate to others in a positive way generally lead a fulfilling life. Unfortunately, there are occasions where a relationship sours or alternatively the wrong kind of person enters our life, and our relationship with them isn’t the most satisfying. A negative relationship will generally be one that prevents you from challenging yourself to be the best that you can be. It is important that you stay true to yourself and have the skills to identify when a relationship isn’t working for you. The following questions may assist you to recognise if your relationship with a particular person is negative:

- Are you comfortable with being in their presence?
- Do you feel happy about answering your phone when you see their name on the display?
- Do you feel at ease when you are talking to them?
- Do you feel that you are receiving as much as you are giving?
- Do you feel that you are appreciated, valued and respected?
- Do you have happy thoughts when you are thinking about them?
- Are you able to be your natural self when you are with them?

If your answer is ‘no’ to some or most of the above questions, then it is likely that it is a negative relationship.

3.7.2 Impacts of negative relationships

Relationships can be enriching, but if there is an imbalance of power they can also be quite destructive. Negative relationships that cause conflict and stress can have a detrimental effect on a person’s overall health and wellbeing. It is therefore very important that we work hard to maintain positive relationships and to eliminate the negative relationships in our lives. Negativity in a relationship may give rise to problems like abuse, neglect and loss of trust. A loss of respect for each other will be inevitable, which will make the future of the relationship very uncertain. Each of us is likely to experience the effects of a negative relationship at some point in our lives and it is essential we develop some strategies to deal with them.

There are different kinds of abuse. Most people think of physical violence when they think about abuse. However, abuse is more than this: it also comprises emotional abuse and sexual abuse. Abuse can also affect anyone; it is not restricted to certain age groups, genders, races or cultures.

Your ‘emotional bank account’

If you opened an ‘emotional bank account’, a negative relationship would be one where there would be a lot of withdrawals and not enough deposits. It is essential that substantial deposits are made for a relationship...
to remain sustainable. Dr Gottman’s balance theory suggests that to achieve a positive relationship, the bank account needs to be in credit. He says that both positivity and negativity are necessary for a relationship to be healthy; however, the balance between the two is not 50:50. Dr Gottman found that a specific ratio exists between the amount of positivity and negativity in stable relationships. The magic ratio of 5:1 states that there must be five times as many positive interactions in a stable relationship as there are negative. Even though some level of negativity will inevitably occur in a relationship, the positive aspects nourish the relationship.

The fear of social rejection
The fear of social rejection is so strong in adolescents because their relationships are essential to their being and growth into adulthood. Teenagers learn extensively from their peers and tend to feel pressured, especially by those who wield more social power, who are older or who are more popular. We fear rejection because we also have a fear of being alone; most of us justify our existence through the acknowledgement and acceptance of others. We have a fundamental need to belong and social rejection can influence our emotional, cognitive and even physical health. Adolescents can sometimes let themselves be drawn into a negative relationship because of the fear of social rejection.

Having an unhealthy fear of social rejection may mean that you place more importance on what other people think of you than your own opinion of yourself. You are also more likely to suppress your true feelings out of fear of not being accepted and respected.

Some situations in which young people fear social rejection are:
• presenting in front of their class
• going to a party where there are many people that they don’t know
• sporting team selections.

It may take time to heal from feeling socially rejected. It is important to keep things in perspective because frequently we take rejection more personally than we should.

Use the Kids Helpline and Social anxiety weblinks in the Resources tab to view websites that offer handy hints on ways to deal with being anxious about social rejection.

3.7.3 Types of abuse
A relationship is considered abusive if a person’s safety is at risk. The risk can result from one or more of the following factors.
• Basic physical needs are not being met.
• Basic psychological needs are not being met.
• Medical needs are not being met.
• Sexual or physical abuse has occurred or there is a risk of it occurring.
• Domestic violence has occurred and there is risk of physical or psychological harm.
Children and young people who are not provided with a safe place to sleep, sufficient food or clothing are at risk of physical harm. If they are not given positive attention, love and care, or they don’t feel safe, then they are at risk of psychological harm. When children are ill and not given the medical treatment and care that they need, they are at risk of harm because their medical needs are not being met.

### Types of abuse of power in relationships

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<th>Physical abuse</th>
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<td>• Punching</td>
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### Emotional abuse

Relationships are emotionally abusive when a person uses their power to try to control another person. Emotional abuse is usually a pattern of behaviour over a period of time rather than an isolated incident. If you are in a relationship in which your friend or partner repeatedly displays the following behaviours, then the relationship would be seen as emotionally abusive.

- Trying to control what you think and feel
- Telling you who you can and cannot see
- Telling you what you can and cannot wear
- Showing extreme jealousy
- Being possessive
- Not wanting you to have other friends
- Threatening to hurt themselves if you break up with them
- Making insults and frequent put-downs
- Making you feel guilty for things you are not responsible for

If you notice these kinds of behaviour in your relationship with your partner or with a friend, it is important to challenge the person in an assertive way as early as possible. Tell them you’re not happy with their behaviour and ask them to respect your right to make your own decisions, have your own friends, and express your ideas and opinions freely without fear.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Australia has more than 5.5 million people aged between 5 and 25 years. Estimates say that 10 per cent are experiencing abuse or neglect, one in seven have mental health issues and almost 30 per cent are concerned about family conflict.

Physical abuse

**Physical abuse** is a criminal offence and includes acts where a person physically harms another, as well as when a person uses threatening actions to intimidate another person. Examples of physical abuse are shown in the figure below.

![Examples of physical abuse](image)

Sexual abuse

**Sexual abuse** can occur to anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity or age. Child sexual abuse occurs when a person uses their power to involve a child or young person in sexual activity. People who sexually abuse may use:

- bribery
- threats
- trickery
- coercion
- force
- manipulation.

Sexual abuse can include:

- suggestive behaviours or comments
- exposure
- viewing pornography
- fondling breasts or genitals
- masturbation
- oral sex
- penetration of the vagina or anus by a finger, penis or an object.
Sexual abuse can have a devastating impact on the lives of and young people. It always involves emotional abuse. Young people who are sexually abused need to remember that what has happened is not their fault and that telling someone who can provide help, such as a person in their support network, is an important step in stopping the abuse.

**HEALTH FACT**

Kids Helpline is a valuable source of advice for young people on a range of issues.

In 2017, 157,656 children and young people made contact with a Kids Helpline counsellor. Although not all children and young people contacting Kids Helpline give their age, 13 per cent stated they were aged from 5–12 years. The top five reasons for young people contacting Kids Helpline were:

1. mental health
2. family relationships
3. emotional wellbeing
4. suicide-related
5. dating and partner related.

**Source:** Kids Helpline, Key Insights 2017, www.kidshelpline.com.au

3.7.4 How do you know whether a relationship is abusive?

Recognising that a relationship is abusive can sometimes be difficult. This may be because the abuser is someone we love or care about, such as a parent, family member or close friend. It may also be because we are too young to know what abuse is, or because someone who has more power than us has coerced or manipulated us into doing something we really don’t want to do.

People can start to recognise that a relationship is abusive by becoming more aware of how they feel and how their body reacts. Abusive relationships or harmful situations can make people feel:

- vulnerable
- scared
- angry
- disappointed
- hurt
- cheated
- picked on
- put down
- terrified
- frightened
- uneasy.

When people are in threatening or harmful situations, their body often reacts by showing warning signals. These signals tell us that the situation is or may be harmful. Think about how your body reacts when someone frightens you or you are walking alone at night. Your body will react in the same way when you are placed in a harmful or unsafe situation.

**Resources**

**On Interactivity: Identifying abuse in negative relationships** (int-6317)
3.7 Activities

Class emotional bank account
1. Develop a class bank account of positive relationship interactions/primers.
   (a) Each student should design their own bank note, leaving a space for a comment to be added.
      Option: Each student may develop more than one bank note or photocopy their design to be used
      on a few occasions. The teacher could also develop a bank note of their own, to participate in the
      activity.
   (b) When you notice another member of the class displaying positive relationship behaviour, write
      down the behaviour in the space for comment on your bank note and deliver it to the class
      emotional bank account (represented by a box in the classroom). You can do this at any time
      during the class and this activity can be carried over a few classes or even the whole term.
   (c) Examples of comments include praising someone for displaying the courage to speak in front of
      the class, thanking a class member for voluntarily helping with another student’s work without
      being prompted by the teacher or using good listening skills to show interest in the conversation.
      Note: It is important to understand that the comments will have a positive effect only if they are
      genuine.
   (d) The teacher can read out the bank notes in the class emotional bank account at a time that they
      determine is appropriate.

Getting back in control
2. In pairs, discuss a situation in which a young person may feel that they have limited or no ability to control a
   negative or abusive situation in a relationship.
3. Often we can feel better about a situation when we have shared our thoughts and fears with others. Many
   people and organisations can offer assistance with a variety of issues within your school as well as the wider
   community. Some of these include:
   • school counsellors
   • psychologists
   • teachers
   • friends
   • parents
   • help lines
   • online advice and assistance sites.
   Select three of these for the situation you described in activity 2 and outline how each may assist the young
   person to regain control of the situation.

Class labels — hypothetical
4. Imagine that each of your classmates had a specific label on their forehead such as Jock, Nerd, Shy, Popular,
   Know-it-all, Arrogant, Nice or Friendly. Reflect on this activity by answering the following questions.
   (a) Do you think that your classmates would be treated differently based on the label that they have
       been given? Explain why or why not.
   (b) Do you think that any particular people in the class may feel socially rejected?
   (c) Do you think that these labels are applicable to real-life scenarios?
   (d) Why is it important not to treat others based on specific labels?
   (e) What are some ways for us to make sure that we interact positively with others?

3.7 Check and challenge

Explain
1. What factors can qualify a relationship as negative and/or abusive?
2. Who can become a victim of abuse?
3. List three things someone might do if they were being emotionally abusive.
4. Describe the effects abuse and violence in relationships can have on a person.
Elaborate
5. Most relationships will go through rough patches. What strategies could you use to get through a rough patch if you feel that the relationship is worth maintaining?
6. What strategies can you use to minimise the occurrence of negative relationships and limit their effect?
7. Have you ever been in a situation where you have felt socially anxious? Describe that situation.

Evaluate
8. Use the Self-talk weblink in the Resources tab to help you identify some ways that positive self-talk can assist you to develop your self-esteem.

3.8 Empowering yourself and others
There are strategies you can use to reduce the potential for harm in unsafe situations. In this subtopic you will explore safety strategies and support networks with the aim of developing a better understanding of keeping yourself safe and helping others when they are feeling unsafe.

3.8.1 Being prepared
All relationships are complex and continually changing and it is important that you develop some strategies to deal with the changes and challenges that you may face.

   Everyone has the right to be safe. When young people find themselves in situations that put them at risk of harm or in relationships that are not respectful, it is important to remember:
   • Young people have a right to be safe and a responsibility to respect the rights of others.
   • No-one has the right to threaten or harm people in any way.
   • Young people can do things to reduce the risk of harm and protect themselves.
   • Young people can do things to help others.

Help-seeking strategies
When individuals feel unsafe in relationships there is an imbalance of power. If you or someone you know feels unsafe in a relationship some strategies that can help include staying with family or at a friends place, talking to a trusted adult or contacting the police or external organisations such as Kids Helpline.

Resources
- Digital doc: Worksheet 3.6 Recognising and assessing potentially unsafe situations (doc-29220)
- Digital doc: Worksheet 3.7 Planning ahead (doc-29221)
3.8.2 Trust, talk, take control
Recognising that you or your friends are at risk of harm is the first step in planning to protect yourself. The strategy ‘trust, talk, take control’ will help you be safe. If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable in a situation:

- **Trust your feelings, your thoughts and your reading of the situation.**
- **Talk about the situation with someone you can trust.**
- **Take control by using your own plan for becoming comfortable and safe.**

It is important that we allow our brains, rather than our emotions, to control how we react.

3.8.3 Working through conflict
When a small conflict arises, it is important to confront it and deal with the problem quickly. This will prevent a small conflict — for example, a difference of opinions with parents, friends or strangers — from becoming an unsafe or dangerous situation.

In dealing with the conflict, the following list may provide a helpful model.

- **Establish rules.** Agree on some rules before you begin trying to resolve the conflict. This helps to keep things on track and promotes communication — for example, no put-downs, interruptions or personal attacks.
- **Identify the conflict.** Each person has their turn at voicing what they think the conflict is about and how they feel about it.
- **Offer solutions.** Each person identifies things that need to change or strategies to resolve the issue. It may be helpful to write these down.
- **Make an agreement.** Decide on a solution. This needs to be agreed on by both people.
- **Review the agreement.** Consider to what degree each person’s needs are being met by the solution.

3.8.4 Developing coping strategies
You can’t change someone else, but you can develop skills to protect and look after yourself when you come up against negative people. Having strong self-esteem and confidence will allow you to think positively about yourself in the face of negative situations. Developing techniques for becoming more optimistic in your life will enhance your resilience and ability to cope with adversity.

> Action may not bring happiness but there is no happiness without action.

William James

William James, a leading philosopher and psychologist at the turn of the nineteenth century, believed that ‘happiness is created as a result of our being active participants in the game of life. Happiness is created, not discovered.’ It is important that we act both proactively and constructively in negative situations so that we maintain a positive sense of wellbeing and overall happiness.
A combination of factors contributes to developing resilience. One of the main factors is having caring and supportive relationships. Positive relationships help boost a person’s resilience. Other contributing factors are shown in the diagram below.

**Factors that contribute to resilience**

- Believing that every problem has a solution
- Looking for learning opportunities in every situation
- Looking after your personal wellbeing
- Setting realistic goals and working towards them
- Keeping things in perspective
- Being proactive and optimistic
- Developing positive connections and relationships
- Accepting that change is inevitable

**DID YOU KNOW?**

It can be very hard to start discussions to resolve conflict. When seeking to end the Vietnam War in the 1970s, diplomats spent months arguing over what shape the conference table should be!

### 3.8 Activities

**Feeling safe at school**

1. For this activity you will need six pieces of poster paper and a coloured felt pen for each student.
   Write one of the following phrases in the middle of each piece of poster paper.
   - Rules to remember about staying safe online
   - Advice for maintaining friendships
   - Support for someone being bullied
   - Showing respect to other students
   - Showing respect to teachers
   - Features of a safe school in which students feel supported
Place the pieces of paper on separate tables around the classroom. Divide the class into six groups. Each group should start at a different piece of the paper.

You need to remain silent throughout this activity. Write down your response on each piece of poster paper. Try to communicate your ideas using one word, a phrase or a short statement.

You can spend one minute at each piece of paper before moving to the next one. Read other students’ comments about each phrase and respond by ticking to affirm or by writing an additional comment to question or clarify.

Once all groups have visited each piece of paper and written their comments, have one student at each post read all the responses to the rest of the class.

As a class, discuss how this collection of responses should contribute to ensuring a safe and respectful school learning community.

2. Assess your school’s bullying policy and discuss if you think changes could be made to the policy that would allow for the students in your school to feel safer. Use the responses that the class developed from activity 1 to guide your analysis of the policy.

Bullying dance

3. Use the Bullying dance weblink in the Resources tab to watch a dance that explores the impact of bullying. In groups of four or five, develop your own dance video that demonstrates the impact bullying may have at your school.

Anti-bullying campaign

4. Use the My Great Big Adventure (click on the ‘Bullying’ link) and Beating bullies weblinks in the Resources tab to watch videos to help you with the following task.

In small groups, design an anti-bullying campaign that highlights the impact bullying can have on individuals, what victims can do to seek help, and why it is important not to be a bystander and instead be an ‘upstander’ and a part of the solution. Follow the instructions below to complete this task.

(a) Mind map — brainstorm (individual task)
   - Develop your own individual ideas about what you would like to include in the anti-bullying campaign. You can use programs such as Inspiration or bubbl.us to help you do this.
   - Take your ideas to your group. Discuss each other's ideas and decide which ones you will use as part of your campaign.

(b) Detailed plan for anti-bullying campaign (group task)
   - In your campaign you should:
     - outline who the target audience is and why you have chosen this audience
     - provide evidence of the type of bullying portrayed in the campaign
     - clearly demonstrate how bullying affects the victim emotionally and/or physically
     - show what might happen if the bullying is not addressed and the negative effect that bullying can have on a person
     - show an appropriate response to bullying that would result in a positive outcome.

(c) Production of anti-bullying campaign (group task)
   - Record your anti-bullying campaign in your group.
   - You could produce your advertisement/campaign using video (for a TV advertisement) or a voice recording (for a radio advertisement), or in another form by negotiation with your teacher.

Resolving conflict

5. In small groups, choose one of the scenarios below and complete the tasks that follow.

   - Your friend visits your house and takes some money from your bedroom.
   - Your parents won’t let you go to your friend’s party on Saturday night because no adults will be attending the party.
   - Your best friend tells the other kids in your class a secret that you confided in him.

   (a) Identify the problem in your scenario and discuss what each character might be feeling.
   (b) Using the model discussed in this topic, identify the steps you would take to resolve each problem.
   (c) In your group, role-play how you would resolve the conflict presented in the scenario.
   (d) As a class, identify the positive strategies that each group used to resolve the conflict.
   (e) Why is conflict resolution an important skill for young people to have?
3.8 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Explain what is meant by the strategy ‘Trust, talk, take control’.
2. List strategies that you could use to reduce the risk of harm in an unsafe situation.
3. Identify three situations it would be better to avoid completely rather than trying to reduce the risk.

Elaborate
4. Why does the solution you arrive at when working through a conflict need to be agreed upon by both people?
5. Why is it useful to establish rules for resolving a conflict?
6. Use the Bullying: no way weblink in the Resources tab to write down some things that you could do to help if someone you know is being bullied.

Evaluate
7. What actions could you take to resolve a difference of opinion with your friend?

3.9 Review

3.9.1 Summary
- Developing positive and respectful relationships is essential to your health and wellbeing.
- Being in a positive relationship means that both people’s opinions are valued and that there is a mutual respect for each other.
- The impact of the online world in developing and maintaining relationships is infinite, but one of the most important things to remember is to treat other people the way that you like to be treated.
- A balance of ‘give and take’ is essential to maintaining a positive and meaningful relationship. It is important that your own needs are being met while also respecting the needs of others.
- You feel connected and a sense of belonging when you have created a support network of meaningful relationships.
- All relationships that you develop through your lifetime will influence and shape your growth and development differently.
- The way that we relate to and communicate with others depends on the type of relationship you have with them.
- Effective communication and listening skills are the key to maintaining positive relationships.
- Relationships that are negative can be quite destructive and have a detrimental effect on your overall health and wellbeing.
• It is important to stay true to your values and morals and have the skills to identify when a relationship is becoming negative.
• Bullying and harassment can happen at any time, anywhere and to anyone. Both bullying and harassment involve one person abusing their power over another.
• Bullying is when deliberate and hurtful behaviours are repeated over a period of time. The three main roles within a bullying situation are the victim, the bully and the bystanders.
• Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs via technology rather than face to face. For example, cyberbullying can occur using the internet and mobile phones. This type of bullying is a significant issue among adolescents and can contribute to mental health issues.
• It is likely that you will experience a bullying situation during your time at school so it is important that you prepare yourself with some strategies to help you deal with it.
• Everyone has the right to feel safe at school and your school has the responsibility to maintain a safe and supportive environment. Everyone within the school community needs to work together to ensure that everyone does feel safe.
• If you are a bystander to a bullying situation and you are not assisting with the solution then you are actually part of the problem. There are five successful techniques that you can use to resolve a situation and become an ‘upstander’.
• By learning some coping strategies to protect and look after yourself in the face of adversity you can enhance your resilience.
• Having a supportive network of friends and family will give you the comfort of knowing that you can access some valuable help in a time of need and celebrate accomplishments together.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
How can you empower yourself and others to develop and maintain positive relationships?
Why is it important to respond and act appropriately to negative interactions and relationships?
What skills and strategies can you use to support yourself and others in negative relationships?

Evaluate your initial responses to the essential questions after having studied this topic.

3.9.2 Key terms

**active constructive** describes a response that shows genuine enthusiastic support

**aggressive** expressing your viewpoint in ways that deny another person’s right to be treated with respect

**assertive** having or showing a confident and forceful personality

**belonging** a sense of knowing where you fit and having meaningful relationships

**bully, bullying** using power over another person to cause harm or to scare them

**harassment** a kind of bullying. It is any form of behaviour that is not wanted, or is offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

**homophobia** an irrational fear, aversion to or discrimination against people who are homosexual, or same-sex attracted. It can also refer to stigma arising from social ideologies about homosexuality.

**homophobic bullying** discriminating against people who are, or who are thought to be, same-sex attracted

**non-assertive** avoiding expressing your viewpoint because of a lack of self-confidence and a belief that someone else’s viewpoint is more important than yours

**physical abuse** abuse using power to be physically violent towards another less powerful person

**power** the ability to do something or make something happen in a relationship

**resilience** an individual’s ability to properly adapt to stress and adversity

**responsibilities** your obligations; for example, you have a responsibility not to harm other people

**rights** something that everyone should have; for example, everyone has the right to feel safe
same-sex attracted  people who are emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same sex. They often identify themselves as being gay or lesbian.
sexual abuse  abuse using power to involve another person in sexual activity against their wishes
social network  the social relationships an individual has developed
social rejection  occurs when an individual is deliberately excluded from a relationship or group interaction
the magic ratio of 5:1  for every one negative interaction or feeling between people, there must be five positive interactions or feelings for the relationship to be positive and in balance
transphobic bullying  negative attitudes, feelings or actions towards transgender or transsexual people, or towards transsexuality
upstander  a person who witnesses or is aware of a situation where someone is being treated unfairly and takes action to correct the situation. This is usually in the form of support for the victim.

3.9 Check and challenge
To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au  Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Key terms quiz  online;
Multiple choice quiz  online;

Check your understanding
1. Describe the characteristics of a positive relationship.
2. Identify the different types of relationships that young people can have and reasons why each are important in their lives.
3. Explain what a respectful relationship is like.
4. Why do some relationships become difficult?
5. Outline your rights and responsibilities in your relationships.
6. How could you improve your relationships with your family and friends?
7. Identify some effective ways to communicate and relate to others.
8. Explain the importance of listening when communicating.
9. What are the qualities of a good friend?
10. What are strategies to keep you safe online?

on Resources
- Digital doc: Worksheet 3.8 Key terms quiz  (doc-29222)
- Digital doc: Worksheet 3.9 Multiple choice quiz  (doc-29223)
- Digital doc: Key terms glossary  (doc-29224)