CONTENT STRAND: HEALTH, WELLBEING AND RELATIONSHIPS

TOPIC 1
Developing my identity

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Introduction

Many factors can influence and affect your sense of identity. Your relationships with others, including family and friends, your personal values and beliefs, the media and your community can all have a significant impact on your identity throughout adolescence.

A positive sense of identity impacts on your health and wellbeing by influencing your decisions and behaviours. Strategies such as goal setting and positive self-talk can assist in challenging negative thinking and helps to minimise the impact of bullying and stereotypes, such as those associated with gender.

It’s all about developing the best version of you!

In this topic you will explore the importance of supporting your own and others’ sense of identity, and developing self-management skills enabling you to respond positively to challenges and effectively manage complex situations.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can I develop my own identity to be the best version of me and support the identity of others?

SYLLABUS OUTCOMES

A student:
- assesses their own and others’ capacity to reflect on and respond positively to challenges (PD5-1)
- assesses and applies self-management skills to effectively manage complex situations. (PD5-9)
1.2 Values, beliefs and independence

Who are you? Why are you important and unique? Where do your values come from and who has the most influence on developing these personality characteristics? In this subtopic you will explore the traits of an individual that help to define their identity, beliefs and personal values.

1.2.1 Knowing yourself

What is your personality?

Each of us has many unique characteristics. Every person is different, and we all have our own personal identity. This individuality makes interactions with other people exciting and interesting, but also challenging. Our identity is shaped by our values, beliefs, life experience and relationships.

Do you know how you are perceived by others? Try this activity to find out. Take a blank piece of paper and trace your hand print. Clearly print your name so this handprint can be identified as yours. Everyone in the class passes their handprints around. As you receive each classmate’s handprint, use positive words to write down one strength or characteristic of that classmate. For example, you might write ‘easy to talk to’ or ‘good listener’.

When your handprint is returned to you, reflect on your classmates’ responses. Circle the three you think best represent you. Why have you chosen those three characteristics? Are there any characteristics listed that you do not agree with? Reflect on why you disagree with them and why you think your classmates see those characteristics in you.

1.2.2 Personal identity

Our personal identity is made up of physical characteristics, skills and attributes, but, more importantly, it is related to the way we feel about ourselves. How we value ourselves, our achievements and our personal goals all affect our future success and happiness in life.

Factors that shape identity

As you get older and your life experience increases, your personal identity is bound to change as a result. The way your identity changes could be influenced by:

- your relationships with family and friends
- community
- society
- personal experiences
- culture
- gender
- the media
- your sexual identity.

Complete the My identity worksheet in the Resources tab and evaluate the factors that shape and influence your identity.

Resources

- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.1 My identity (doc-29270)
1.2.3 Who shapes our identity?

What happens in everyday life can affect our sense of identity. This is because identity is created and developed in social relationships. Even seemingly unimportant day-to-day contacts have important effects on a person’s sense of who they are. So, who shapes your identity and what impacts do they have on you?

Family

Family is one of the biggest influences on your identity. How does your family support your individual identity? Families can teach you about challenging stereotypes; they may role model certain behaviours and teach you about tolerance and respect; they can expose you to diversity and different experiences and encourage friendships; they can teach you to have pride in your own cultural identity and help you to cope with prejudice. Our families are very influential when we are younger and are more dependent on them. Our parents may provide more traditional values about manners, morals and behaviour. They may teach us tolerance, awareness and respect for different beliefs.

Friends/peers

Our peers can have an influence on our identity. Our peers have a greater influence on us as we mature and become more independent. Your choice of fashion, music and language are likely to have been influenced by your friends. Our peers can also influence how we behave and the decisions we make.

Societal values

People’s common beliefs bind them together as a group and influence their actions. This is true of parents, coaches, teachers, sporting associations, religious groups and environmental groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups within society</th>
<th>May influence your beliefs about (but not limited to):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>clothes, where you go and your use of leisure time, the language you use, your body, types/amount of food you eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>where you can go, what time to be home, family responsibilities, behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>fitness, teamwork, commitment, body image</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
TABLE 1.1  How the values of groups in society may influence you (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups within society</th>
<th>May influence your beliefs about (but not limited to):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| School teachers             | • learning  
|                             | • work ethic  
|                             | • behaviour  
|                             | • uniform and appearance  
|                             | • punctuality  
| Community laws              | • road rules  
|                             | • vandalism  
|                             | • stealing  
|                             | • trespassing  
|                             | • littering  
|                             | • smoking and drinking in public places  
| Activist groups             | • issues such as the environment or politics  
| Religious groups            | • the way you treat others  
|                             | • social conscience  
|                             | • the role of gender in society  
|                             | • the acceptance of same-sex attraction  
|                             | • pre-marital sex  
|                             | • the meaning of marriage  

Complete the **Who affects your identity?** worksheet in the Resources tab to explore the influences on your identity.

**Resources**

![Digital doc: Worksheet 1.2 Who affects your identity? (doc-29271)](doc-29271)

1.2.4 What shapes our identity?

**Body image/self-esteem**

We all come in different shapes and sizes and there is no ‘perfect’ body type. We live in a world that sends us all sorts of messages about the ‘perfect’ body. It is not surprising then, that instead of embracing and celebrating diversity in all body types, we often concentrate on what can be physically unattainable perfection. The reality is that both males and females come in different shapes and sizes, so it is unrealistic to represent only one body type as beautiful. With so many physical and emotional changes occurring during puberty, it is normal throughout this time for youth to be more self-aware. How does your body image shape who you are?
Unrealistic standards about body image and physical appearance

Having unrealistic standards about body image and physical appearance can often negatively affect our identity. Examples of negative effects include the development of mental health issues and eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia. Having unrealistic standards about what your body should look like can also lead to poor self-esteem, which has a negative effect on identity.

The media can expose adolescents to unrealistic images of appearance through magazines and social media.

It is important to develop positive ideas and feelings about body image and physical appearance in order to enhance our identity positively and contribute to positive self-esteem. Being healthy, safe and having positive wellbeing is important in contributing to a positive identity. How can you develop positive ideas about body image and physical appearance?

Weblink: Dove: Evolution of a model

Culture and community

The culture a young person grows up in affects the way they see themselves, including how they grow and move into adulthood. Some cultures have formal celebrations to mark the beginning of adulthood, such as the Jewish celebration of Bar Mitzvah, when a boy turns 13 years old. Complete the Cultural differences worksheet in the Resources tab to investigate how and when other cultures celebrate the transition into adulthood. In other cultures, a sense of place influences the identity of individuals and communities. For example, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, a connection to country is important in shaping a sense of self, reflecting a deep spiritual connection that influences identity.

A person’s understanding of their own and others’ cultural identity develops from birth and is shaped by the values and attitudes found at home and in the surrounding community. This identity becomes more complex over time as people develop allegiances to different groups within the broader society. Cultures develop and change as the belief systems and ways of life of different groups adapt under other cultural influences, including mass media and popular culture, to create new identities.

In a culturally diverse society like Australia, individuals may have multiple identities through identification with several different subcultures. These may include identity based on cultural heritage, family or birthplace; religious or social identity; gender identity; and identity as members of Australian society. It is not uncommon to be a part of several communities at the one time. You might be part of a sporting community and at the same time part of a multicultural community, a school community and a rural community. So how might these different communities affect our sense of identity? Being part of a group generally involves being part of that group’s particular culture, which could influence factors such as how you act, how you speak or dress, and the types of people you associate with and are influenced by. These factors shape each individual’s identity within that community.
People develop different identities within different communities.

Think of a sporting or cultural community you are associated with. How could this group influence your identity? Take into account factors such as:
• the types of role models in the group
• the expectations on you as a member of the group
• what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
• the types of people that are part of the group
• what happens when you don’t comply with the ‘rules’ of that community.

Media influences
In our society, the media holds a key role in influencing ideas, behaviours and social norms. It is important to bear in mind that often the media’s job is to sell something — a story, attitude or product. Can you think of a situation where you have been influenced by the media?

Very often, the pressures to look or behave like somebody else are very strong. These pressures may be harmful to our physical and emotional health. Conversely, sometimes making minor changes to our image — for example, changing our hair colour or style, buying new clothes or starting a fitness regime — can make us feel better about ourselves and have a positive impact on our sense of wellbeing.

Advertising and media representation of sexual behaviour and gender stereotypes can have a strong influence on our attitudes towards our own personal
identity. Images that are inappropriate or unachievable for most people are portrayed as normal and can make us feel inadequate or unhappy with ourselves.

How do you feel gender is represented in the media? What messages do the media give out about what it means to have a good time and be fun to be around? How can these images be interpreted in respect to personal identity?

It is also important to examine how diversity is represented in the media and the influence these representations have on individuals’ identities. Is enough being done to portray minorities accurately and fairly on television or within the media? While there has been some improvement, minorities are still not fully represented in the Australian media and as a result are often stereotyped. A truly diverse media allows for the voices of minorities — Indigenous peoples, seniors, people with disabilities, cultural groups — and all Australians to be heard and accurately depicted.

Investigate how young people are portrayed in the media using the Media messages worksheet in the Resources tab.

Messages the media send can influence attitudes within the community. Often opinions and stereotypes are formed and communities adopt certain rules and guidelines that we are all expected to abide by. Have you ever thought that older Australians should act in a particular way? Is it acceptable to be a stay-at-home dad while the mother is the breadwinner? Can a male be a make-up artist, or is that a job reserved for women?

What happens when someone challenges the community’s ideas of gender and diversity? Discuss with your class some ways the communities you are a part of expect you to act, based on factors such as your age, gender and position in the group. How are diversity and gender catered for in the communities you are a part of?

Socialisation

From a young age, we are dressed, spoken to and expected to behave in ways that identify us as girls or boys. This is part of socialisation. Traditionally, these boundaries of being feminine or masculine have been well defined and socially accepted. For example:

- young girls wore dresses, played with dolls, didn’t get dirty, and behaved in a gentle and quiet manner
- young boys behaved boisterously, were more adventurous and active, took more physical risks, got dirty and played with toys such as trucks, trains and cars
- adult females were nurturing, were interested in friends and family, liked pretty things and were concerned with domestic duties
- adult males were competitive, were expected to provide for their families, did outdoor chores and did not show emotion in public.

Children are often socialised into stereotypical behaviours as either ‘boys’ or ‘girls’.
Although such rigid expectations of masculine or feminine behaviour are no longer as common, there are still people who adhere to the traditional stereotypes and expect males and females to behave in particular ways. This can be very confusing for some young people who just want to be ‘normal’. Have you ever considered how children’s toys reinforce gender stereotypes? Use the Not happy about gendered toys and Toys and gender weblinks in the Resources tab to analyse how advertising and toys can affect a child’s perception of male and female behaviour.

**1.2.5 Personal views, beliefs and values**
What we feel and believe about a range of issues is part of our personal identity. These issues are diverse and may include fashion, music, drugs and alcohol, diet, sexuality, leisure pursuits and politics. Opinions about such issues affect the decisions we make and the way we behave.

Our values, beliefs and attitudes are the products of our own individual circumstances and experiences. They are influenced by a range of people and groups, and reflect our views on morality, respect, loyalty and honesty. As we gain independence and establish an individual identity, we may develop stronger or different values. These may be similar to our peers, because we often choose to be friends with people who have values that complement our own. This allows us to work together to establish common interests. However, as we develop our independence, we should also become more open to understanding the values of others.

Conflict can arise when there is disagreement between an individual’s personal values and those of society. This happens when different individuals do not place the same level of importance on certain values. For example, conflict occurs at school when an individual student does not value the school’s code of behaviour. It may be that the student values socialising more than learning. However, to function effectively in the school community, the student needs to respect the codes of the school. Sometimes when there is conflict, it is important not to give in and accept something with which you do not agree.

At times, our personal values can be in conflict. For example, if a person values his or her family’s trust but he or she also values having fun with friends, difficulties may arise. Imagine having to make a decision to leave a great party so you are home in time for your curfew. In cases such as this, you need to weigh up the possible consequences of your actions and decide the best approach so that you do not compromise your most deeply held values.
1.2.6 Shaping our personal identity: goals and achievements

Personal identity is shaped by our past achievements and future goals:

- **past achievements** — The things we have achieved and the success we have had in the past help to form our current view of ourselves. Our perceived abilities affect what we think we can achieve and cope with in the future. These are influenced by our history, heritage and upbringing.

- **goals for the future** — The goals we set for our future are a way of defining ourselves and who we want to be. These goals may relate to relationships, career pathways, health, sport, education and travel. They affect our present view of ourselves and reflect our values, beliefs and attitudes.

Goals are personal expectations, so think carefully and choose positive influences to help.

Making your goals **SMARTER** can help you achieve success.

- **S** – Make your goals **specific**; keep them short and to the point.
- **M** – Goals should be **measurable** to allow you to assess how successful you have been.
- **A** – **Achievable** goals make it easier to be accountable for improvement.
- **R** – A **realistic** goal is something you can achieve and reduces the chance of disappointment.
- **T** – Place a **timeframe** on your goals so you have a target to aim for.
- **E** – Periodically **evaluate** your progress.
- **R** – Give yourself a **reward** when you are successful.

Alana Boyd’s belief in herself helped her to overcome two failed attempts and take out the gold medal in the women’s pole vault at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. She claimed the gold medal on her third and final vault.
1.2 Activities

Goal setting

1. When setting goals, it is a good idea to first consider your past achievements before deciding how you wish to build on them or what new directions you wish to pursue. List some of your past achievements, ensuring you include things that have made you feel good about yourself. Consider the things that you have done for your family, friends, in sport, at school and in the local community.

2. Goal setting gives you control of your future. Complete the Set your goals worksheet in the Resources tab to set some goals. Make sure they follow the SMARTER guidelines outlined in this subtopic.

3. Using the Set your goals worksheet, write about how setting and achieving goals can positively contribute to your identity and overall wellbeing.

Communicating personal values

4. (a) In small groups, choose a controversial issue about which you all have the same opinion. You may choose a specific issue from one of the following general topics or choose one of your own (check with your teacher first).
   - Underage smoking
   - Literacy levels
   - Dress codes
   - Unemployment
   - Abortion
   - Video games
   - Teenage pregnancy
   - Pornography
   - Stereotypes and/or racism
   - DVD or CD piracy

(b) Write down your group’s opinion on this issue.

(c) What values underpin your group’s chosen point of view? Does gender, culture or your community’s values affect your views?

(d) Write your issue up on a large sheet of paper and place it on the wall.

(e) Walk around the room and add your own opinions and comments to each group’s graffiti sheet. You are assisting the other groups to include all points of view and opinions on their chosen issue, and the other groups are helping you in the same way. Consider this your ‘local’ community view on the issue.

(f) Using newspapers, magazines and internet articles, collect public comment and debate about the issue. Describe the types of language the writers use to get their point across. Collect this information before your next lesson. Consider this your ‘global’ community view on the issue.

(g) Think of ways of clearly organising your findings, such as using a mind map or analytical report. Compare your own group view with the local and global community views you have gathered. Discuss whether all the global community views were raised in the graffiti sheets. Why or why not?

(h) Present your findings to the class.

Responsible or irresponsible?

5. The following decisions have been made. Discuss whether they are responsible or irresponsible. If you need more information to decide, identify what factors might affect whether the decision was a responsible one or not.
   - To drink alcohol at a party
   - To complete all schoolwork by the due dates
   - To ignore the curfew time set by my parents
   - To have sexual intercourse
   - To never get into a car with a drunk driver
   - To respect my parents’ right to expect cooperative behaviour from me
   - To get a part-time job
   - To break up a long-term, intimate relationship via text message

Discuss your justification with a partner and then choose your best response to share with the class.
Expectations of teenagers
6. (a) Design a survey to investigate family and community expectations of teenagers. You could investigate levels and issues of independence, values and attitudes of young people, or specific influences on young people.
(b) Record your own answers to the questions you have developed.
(c) Choose a range of people to survey, including at least three community members and three family members. To perform the survey, you may use photocopies of a prepared survey form, send the survey by email or record survey responses using a video camera.
(d) Using the information gathered from your survey, comment in writing on the following statement: ‘Our families and the community have a strong influence on us as we develop personal identity and independence’. Alternatively, you could present your findings to the class in the form of a class debate.

Body image and physical appearance
7. Use the What is body image? weblink in the Resources tab to answer the following questions.
(a) What do ‘healthy’ and ‘unhealthy’ body image mean?
(b) What can you do to have positive feelings about body image and physical appearance?
(c) Create a campaign to show how you can challenge the unrealistic images of body image portrayed in the media.

Express your opinions
8. You have views about a lot of things. Choose three issues that you feel strongly about and then complete the EXPRESS YOURSELF worksheet in the Resources tab. Use the list of ideas below to help you choose your topic.
• Children
• Community laws
• Consumer rights and responsibilities
• Drugs
• Families
• Food
• Gender roles
• Money
• Music
• Pets
• Racism
• Relationships
• Right and wrong
• School
• Sex
• Sports
• STIs
• Work
• Your rights and responsibilities

Resources
- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.5 Set your goals (doc-29274)
- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.6 Express yourself (doc-29275)
- Weblink: What is body image?
1.2 Check and challenge

**Explain**

1. What do you think influences people to have unrealistic expectations of body image and appearance?
2. Who or what has the most influence on your life? How and why do they have this influence?

**Elaborate**

3. When you reflect on a decision you made, do you often congratulate yourself on making a ‘wise’ decision or chastise yourself when you regret the decision? Why?
4. How do your peers positively and negatively influence your identity?
5. Explain why some cultures celebrate the transition to adulthood with a formal event.

**Evaluate**

6. With increasing independence comes change. Identify three things that, because of increasing independence, may bring about a change in:
   (a) a friendship
   (b) a family relationship
   (c) an intimate relationship
   (d) your sense of self or personal identity.
7. Why is it important to set short-term and long-term goals?

1.3 Norms, stereotypes and expectations

A stereotype is a commonly held belief about a specific group or type of individual. Stereotypes are often based on assumptions rather than facts and can be directly influenced by the values, beliefs and attitudes of a community. Norms reflect the patterns or standards of behaviour that a particular society consider normal.

1.3.1 What are stereotypes?

Social behaviour, employment expectations, notions about child rearing and family responsibilities are all closely related to gender stereotypes in traditionalist societies. Today, all young people in Australia have choices to make regarding their future, such as their career, study, marriage and having children. Although limits are placed on these choices (for example, financial, cultural and religious expectations, and family pressure), the range of possibilities for both men and women has widened considerably since our parents and grandparents were young.

What are the stereotypes of young people presented in the media? Collect catalogue ads and newspaper reports, or research some blogs, and then classify them under different stereotyped headings (for example, cool jock, digital native or out-of-control delinquent). What do your categories show about stereotypes? Are young people often shown in the media as carefree, having fun, acting dangerously, lucky or lazy?
1.3.2 Gender roles and stereotypes

Historically, certain personal characteristics have been strongly associated with gender: females have been expected to behave in a gentle, nurturing and subordinate manner; their main role in life was to be a good wife and mother. Women who strayed outside these expectations to pursue a career or live a single life were regarded as eccentric or lacking in femininity. Conversely, males have traditionally been expected to be strong, domineering, physical and lacking in emotion. Their main role in life was to be the money earner for the family and to provide stability and status. Men who chose to be nurses, dancers or other professions generally considered to be ‘feminine’ were regarded as unusual by people who adhered to the traditional model of behaviour.

Gender roles and stereotypes can sometimes cause problems in relationships because there is an imbalance in power. In a healthy relationship, both people involved should have a say in decision-making. This includes everything from where to go on a date to whether to start or continue a sexual relationship. As we develop independence and make important decisions, we should think carefully about our role in a relationship.

1.3.3 Gender and sport

In recent years there have been signs that traditional gender stereotypes and the boundaries they have created are breaking down. In sport, there have been changes in the traditional sporting activities pursued by men and women; for example, female weightlifters are now recognised as athletes in their own right.

Although there is still a significant difference in the media coverage of male and female sports the situation is improving. Events such as the Rebel Women’s Big Bash League for cricket, the women’s AFL season and Australian Netball matches are now televised more widely.

Females can participate in previously male-dominated sports such as rugby and V8 supercars if they are willing to search for them, but often not at the same professional level. Have sporting stereotypes limited the opportunities for women to have careers in sport?

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Sexploitation’ is a word used to describe the marketing or promotion of an athlete by using their sexual attributes, such as their physical appearance. At times, the value of an athlete is judged in terms of their body type and appearance, rather than their sporting ability and skill.
1.3.4 Gender and our bodies
Males and females often have different perceptions of their bodies and how they want to look. Females often want to lose weight and be thinner, whereas males want to be taller, stronger and have more muscles. In response to these body image perceptions, specific genders are often targeted in particular marketing campaigns. One example of this gender-stereotyped marketing is food. Are there specific foods you eat that the opposite sex wouldn’t? Complete the **Food gendering** worksheet in the Resources tab to explore typically ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ foods, and how food gendering developed.

**Resources**
- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.7 Food gendering (doc-29276)

1.3.5 Teenage stereotypes
Teenagers are not all hormone driven, rude, moody and sullen. Yet some people believe that the typical teenager going through their developmental years demonstrates each of these characteristics regularly. Is this a fair judgement? Are all teenagers the same? The answer is a resounding ‘no’. Each individual will develop through the values, beliefs and attitudes they consider most important. However, this is greatly influenced by society’s stereotypes. Use the **Teenager stereotypes** weblink in the Resources tab to watch a video that debunks common myths about teenagers.

**Resources**
- Weblink: Teenager stereotypes

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1.3 Activities
Stereotypical behaviours
It is claimed these tips were first published in a 1955 edition of *Housekeeping Monthly* magazine in the USA. While the legitimacy of the article is in doubt, the text does reflect widely-held beliefs of that time.

**Tips to look after your husband (1955)**
- **Have dinner ready**: Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal on time. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospects of a good meal are part of the warm welcome needed.
- **Prepare yourself**: Take 15 minutes to rest so that you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting. His boring day may need a lift.
• **Clear away the clutter:** Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives, gathering up school books, toys, papers, etc. Then run a dust cloth over the tables. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too.

• **Prepare the children:** Take a few minutes to wash the children’s hands and faces (if they are small) and comb their hair and, if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part.

• **Minimise all noise:** At the time of arrival, eliminate all noise of washer, dryer, dishwasher or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and be glad to see him.

• **Some don’ts:** Don’t greet him with problems or complaints. Don’t complain if he’s late for dinner. Count this as minor compared with what he might have gone through that day.

• **Make him comfortable:** Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or suggest he lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange his pillows and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax — unwind.

• **Listen to him:** You may have a dozen things to tell him but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first.

• **Make the evening his:** Never complain if he does not take you out to dinner or to other places of entertainment. Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure, his need to be home and relax.

• **The goal:** Try to make your home a place of peace and order where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit.

1. How have things changed in homes since the 1950s?
2. What has influenced a change in attitudes and expectations within the home?
3. Do you think some people still live by these values and expectations? Why?
4. Develop three tips for looking after your relationship with your partner that are relevant to today’s values.

In the 1950s, many women were expected to perform only domestic duties. Women now have the opportunity to pursue careers. However, because of stereotyped gender roles, they are often still expected to take responsibility for raising a family.
Famous faces
5. List two famous men and two famous women whom you admire (they may be contemporary or historical figures) from each of the following categories:
- sportsperson
- actor or musician
- inventor, artist or explorer
- politician or statesperson.
   (a) Which categories did you struggle with?
   (b) Why do you think some categories were more difficult to choose from than others?
   (c) Why do you admire the people you have listed?

Choosing a birthday present
6. (a) Choose a birthday present for:
   - a newborn girl and boy
   - a girl and boy turning five
   - a girl and boy turning 15
   - a girl and boy turning 21.
   (b) Do your choices tend to be gender-specific or gender-neutral?
7. Look at a toy catalogue from a major department store or a large toy retailer.
   (a) Is the catalogue helpful in providing a wide range of gifts for boys and girls?
   (b) Are there many gender-neutral choices?
   (c) Do the advertised toys reinforce stereotypes about boys and girls?
   (d) Personally reflect on your own thoughts about reinforcing stereotypes at such a young age. Predict some issues that may arise when young children are sent such strong messages.

Teen movies
8. (a) List five stereotypes popular in teen movies (for example, geek or jock).
   (b) Describe what characteristics are common to the stereotypes.
   (c) As a class, share your descriptions and compare the similarities between the stereotypes.

Occupations
9. (a) Compare three occupations you think are dominated by men and three you think are dominated by women. In your comparison, discuss why you think men and women choose to follow these different career paths. Consider some of the following aspects of work:
   - peer acceptance
   - nature of the occupation (for example, physical work or highly social)
   - salaries and status.
   (b) Where do these opinions on careers come from?
   (c) What effects do these opinions have on a young person’s goal setting and career choice?

1.3 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Describe the effects stereotypes can have on people’s sense of identity.
2. How can stereotypes influence people’s expectations?

Elaborate
3. Why do norms exist?
4. Where do stereotypes come from and who do you think has the most influence over them?

Evaluate
5. In what situations can stereotypes be useful or positive?
1.4 Sense of identity, health and wellbeing

Understanding your sense of identity is important for your personal health and wellbeing. The better you are able to know and accept yourself, the better your chance of being able to enjoy a happy and meaningful life.

1.4.1 Getting to know our sense of identity

Our sense of identity impacts greatly on our feelings, emotions, relationships and day-to-day functioning, but many of us do not fully understand how it can affect our health. We allow ourselves to be hurt, to get angry and let frustration get the better of us. But it doesn’t always need to be this way. What do you know about your sense of self? Use the Personality quiz weblink in the Resources tab to complete the quiz and find out! Suggest areas in your life that you are happy with and others you would like to improve.

Resources

Weblink: Personality quiz

Our sense of identity is how we see ourselves and what we believe about ourselves. Some young people have a positive sense of identity. They like who they are, feel worthy and confident, and recognise that they are capable people and their contribution is valuable. However, some young people’s sense of identity can be quite negative. This may mean that they are not happy with who they are, are not confident about their abilities, they may have low self-esteem and may experience feelings of worthlessness.

Just as there are many factors that impact on our level of health, there are also many factors that influence the formation of our sense of self, including:
- **physical** — looks, level of physical fitness and athletic ability
- **social** — peers, family, youth groups, sporting clubs, teachers, school, employment, culture, the media and relationships
- **emotional** — positive reinforcement, compliments, success, failures, expression of emotions, feelings and needs
- **spiritual** — belief in things greater than us, religion, faith and feeling connected with the environment.

Sense of identity, health, safety and wellbeing are **interdependent**. Each has the potential to impact on the others. Finding ways to support your own sense of identity and that of others is important in maintaining a positive sense of identity.
A positive sense of identity can impact on our health and wellbeing by influencing the decisions we make and behaviours that relate to our health. For example, young people with a positive sense of identity are more likely to:

- speak up when they don’t agree with something
- assert their opinions and beliefs
- be motivated to exercise regularly
- challenge negative peer pressure and say ‘no’ when they are being pressured to do something they don’t want to do
- choose not to smoke or experiment with drugs
- use healthy methods of stress release
- make an effort to maintain a healthy weight by doing physical activity and eating a nutritious diet
- adopt positive anger management strategies
- express emotions in a positive way
- be realistic about their abilities and seek to improve themselves.

HEALTH FACT

Hypnotherapy can assist with improving self-confidence and self-esteem. It is about empowerment and learning to imagine yourself the way you would like to be. If you can imagine yourself being self-confident, you can achieve it in your life. Hypnotherapy is a tool that can be used to help people re-discover how to think in a positive way.

Just as your sense of self can impact on your level of health, your health can impact on your sense of self. It is difficult to have a positive sense of self when the components that contribute to your level of health are negative. For example, being chronically unwell, having difficulty maintaining a social life and feeling depressed would most likely have a negative influence on your sense of self.
Maintaining a good level of health can have a positive influence on your sense of self. Young people who maintain a healthy, fit body and healthy weight by regularly exercising, eating a nutritious diet and getting adequate rest are more likely to be happy with their physical appearance. Similarly, young people who have a range of positive relationships with family and friends, and who achieve success in their lives, are more likely to see themselves as competent and have high self-esteem.

Young people who can balance the challenges in their lives, such as the demands of school, holding down a part-time job and engaging in active leisure pursuits will more likely feel a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives. The fact that they are engaging in their lives, working at improving themselves and achieving goals will support their sense of identity. Young people who disengage from their lives may fall into an unproductive lifestyle and will most likely have a poorer sense of identity as a result.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

It is realistic to assume that everyone will submit to peer pressure at some time in their life. Unfortunately, students with low self-esteem, low self-confidence, fewer successful relationships and loneliness or depression are at greater risk of negative peer pressure behaviours such as exploring drugs, shoplifting and bullying others.

**1.4 Activities**

**Exploring your sense of identity**

1. Create a mind map or use short sentences to describe how you see yourself and the things that you believe about yourself.
2. Do you think you have a positive sense of identity? Why or why not?
3. Identify and explain the influences in your life that have contributed to the formation of your sense of identity.
4. With a partner, develop a mind map of the characteristics of a positive sense of identity.

**Exploring a person’s sense of identity**

5. Read the scenario in the ‘Our sense of identity affects our interactions with others’ figure and then answer the following questions.
   (a) Describe what each character is thinking and feeling.
   (b) Explain what you think their self-beliefs are.
   (c) Explain how their beliefs could impact on their sense of identity.
   (d) Describe how their thoughts have influenced their actions.
   (e) Rewrite the scenario so the characters’ thoughts and beliefs result in more positive actions. Share your scenario with a partner and discuss the reasons behind your changes.
6. (a) With a partner, discuss what decisions a young person with a positive sense of identity would most likely make in each of the following scenarios:
   - being in a car where friends are drunk and distracting the driver
   - being in a relationship where their partner is pressuring them to have sex
   - being a bystander in a bullying situation
   - being offered cannabis.
   (b) As a class, discuss each scenario.
Our values and influences on health issues

7. In groups, choose a health issue from the options below and using the Teenage Health weblink in the Resources tab, complete the table outlining how our values may impact our attitudes and behaviours.

Health issues:
- Alcohol
- Body image
- Bullying
- Smoking
- Illicit drugs
- Sexual relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal values regarding the health issue (Include both positive and negative)</th>
<th>Positive effects on attitudes and behaviours regarding the health issue</th>
<th>Negative effects on attitudes and behaviours regarding the health issue</th>
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1.4 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Explain the interdependence between a person’s sense of identity and their health. Provide examples to support your explanation.
2. Explain the relationship between school, employment, leisure and a sense of identity.

Evaluate
3. Analyse your own sense of identity and how it has influenced decisions that have impacted on your level of health.

Elaborate
4. Describe factors that influence the formation of our sense of identity.
1.5 Ways to support yourself and others

When you are treated unfairly or perhaps are the subject of put-downs, you may feel angry, upset or stressed. However, there are ways of dealing with frustration and turning negatives into positives. Adopting affirmative strategies is far better for your health.

1.5.1 Supporting myself

What we think about ourselves and how other people treat us can affect the way we feel and the behaviours that we choose. When young people think they are worthwhile and accepted, they are more likely to engage in their lives and relationships with others. There are things you can do to support yourself as you go through adolescence. These skills can also be used in the future when you are an adult to continue to support your wellbeing.

But how can we support the wellbeing of others? Perhaps it is as simple as sharing a kind word. Use the Stop bullying! weblink in the Resources tab to discuss how words can hurt. Consider how we can support those around us by being proactive with our behaviour.

Dealing with other people’s negative attitudes and behaviours can help you support and strengthen your sense of self. Unfortunately, some people feel that they need to exert their power or compensate for their own low self-worth by putting other people down.

A put-down can be a remark, comment, attitude or behaviour that is intended to make another person feel bad. Examples of put-downs include remarks such as you’re stupid, you’re no good at anything or you’re useless, or an attitude that attempts to make you feel inferior. When people have a negative sense of self, these put-downs can be quite damaging.

An effective strategy for dealing with put-downs is to think about why the person is using the put-down, rather than the content of what they are saying. By doing this, you will realise that the put-down is about the other person trying to be more powerful than you or trying to make you feel bad. This is their problem, not yours. You can also try to ignore the comments or behaviours; or be assertive in telling the person that you don’t appreciate their comment or attitude.

Another strategy is positive self-talk. This involves interpreting our thoughts, opinions and reflections about ourselves in a positive way. Self-talk can be negative or positive. A positive self-talk statement might be ‘I know I can do better with a little more effort’. A negative
self-talk statement might be ‘I’m no good at anything’. When young people use negative self-talk every day, it is difficult for them to feel good about themselves. They are more likely to adopt negative health behaviours and be unmotivated to participate fully in what life has to offer.

Consider your thoughts about yourself. Do you focus on your weaknesses and ignore your strengths? Do you make things seem much worse than they are? If the answer is ‘yes’ to these questions, it is time to start reframing your thoughts and engaging in positive self-talk.

Learning about responsibility is an ongoing process throughout childhood and adolescence. It is not uncommon for some young people to either not take responsibility for their actions or take responsibility for someone else’s actions.

It is an important skill to be able to differentiate between a situation or decision that is your responsibility or someone else’s actions. There will be times when you are responsible in a situation, there will be times when there is shared responsibility and there will be times when it is not your responsibility but the responsibility of another person.

DID YOU KNOW?

Self-talk was once deemed a form of mental illness; however, it is now considered an important part of a healing process. When people ‘self-talk’ they often find answers to their problems and can decipher how they feel. This results in reduced stress, enhanced confidence and positive thoughts.

1.5.2 Supporting others

All of us need support in one way or another. Providing support to those who need it is good for our sense of identity and also for those who receive our support. Supporting others can assist in developing an individual’s positive sense of identity.

Using positive self-talk in the company of family, friends and peers can help support these individuals through difficult times.

It is also important to be observant of the needs of others and when to reach out and help. Listening and talking to someone going through a difficult time can assist that person to feel supported and cared for. This will contribute to an individual’s overall wellbeing.
1.5 Activities

Self-talk
1. Consider each of the following scenarios and your thoughts about each one, then complete the tasks below.
   - Asking out someone you are attracted to for the first time
   - Applying for a part-time job
   - Receiving a compliment about your looks
   - Participating in a performance at a school assembly
   (a) Describe the self-talk that you would most likely engage in in each of the situations.
   (b) Explain how your self-talk would affect how you felt in each situation and what you would do.
   (c) Identify if your self-talk is positive or negative.
   (d) Rewrite negative statements into positive self-talk.
   (e) Discuss your answers with a partner and examine each person’s positive self-talk statements to determine if they would be helpful in each scenario.

Challenging negative thinking
2. Using the Challenging negative thinking weblink in the Resources tab, complete the following questions.
   (a) What are some strategies you could use to challenge negative thoughts about a situation?
   (b) Find and note down some positive affirmations or inspirational quotes that you could use when you’re feeling down. You might like to create a series of cards or a poster with these statements to stick on your wall at home or to post around the classroom.

Stop bullying!
3. Using the Stop bullying! weblink in the Resources tab as a reference, in small groups create an advertisement that targets bullying. Your advertisement should include strategies to stop bullying and help support others experiencing bullying. Present your advertisement to the rest of the class.

How to check if a friend is ok
4. Using the How do I ask a friend if they’re OK? weblink in the Resources tab as a reference, in groups, create a digital brochure with strategies someone could use to check on the wellbeing of a friend.

How we can support our friends
5. Using the 5 practical ways you can be a supportive and caring friend weblink in the Resources tab, answer the following questions.
   (a) Identify ways that you can be a supportive and caring friend.
   (b) Explain why the suggested strategies would help a friend.
   (c) How can being a supportive and caring friend contribute to our own positive identity and the identity of others?

Life challenges
6. Using the Tough times weblink in the Resources tab, complete the following questions.
   (a) Identify examples of tough times that adolescents may experience.
   (b) Choose one example and provide reasons why the situation would be challenging.
   (c) What strengths would someone need to get through the life challenge?
   (d) In what ways could someone have personal growth from experiencing a challenging life situation?

Resources

- Weblink: Challenging negative thinking
- Weblink: Stop bullying!
- Weblink: How do I ask a friend if they’re OK?
- Weblink: 5 practical ways you can be a supportive and caring friend
- Weblink: Tough times
1.5 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Explain what a ‘put-down’ is and how put-downs can influence a person’s sense of self.
2. Explain why self-talk can be an effective strategy to support your own sense of self.
3. Explain how you could support a friend who is going through a difficult time.

Elaborate
4. Describe strategies that you could adopt when others use ‘put-downs’ towards you and your friends.

Evaluate
5. Evaluate the issues in accepting responsibility for telling your friend’s parents that they are with you when they are actually going out on a date.

1.6 Review

1.6.1 Summary
- Our sense of identity is how we see ourselves and what we believe about ourselves.
- Self-esteem refers to how much we value or accept ourselves for who and what we are.
- Physical, social, emotional and spiritual factors all impact on our level of health.
- A positive sense of identity impacts on our health and wellbeing by influencing our decisions and behaviours.
- Engaging in life’s experiences is important in achieving a productive lifestyle.
- Having positive expectations about body image and physical appearance is important in contributing to a positive sense of identity.
- Personal values can influence our attitudes and behaviours in relation to a variety of health issues.
- A stereotype is a commonly held belief about a specific group or type of individual.
- Stereotypes are often based on assumptions rather than facts and can be directly influenced by the values, beliefs and attitudes of a community.
- Dealing with ‘put-downs’, thinking positively, utilising stress management techniques, managing anger, expressing needs and feelings, and taking responsibility are important strategies to help support ourselves.
- Positive self-talk is important to challenge negative thoughts and opinions from others.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
How can I develop my own identity to be the best version of me and support the identity of others?

Evaluate your initial response to the essential question after having studied this topic.

1.6.2 Key terms
- attitude: an outlook on something; a way of thinking or behaving; what a person thinks; shown in a person’s way of behaving
- behaviour: the way in which we behave
- beliefs: a philosophy or viewpoint on issues
- conflict: a difference of opinion
- disengage: to withdraw from or be passive in life
diversity  the differences between people and groups of people, including those of culture, race, religion, gender, and life experience. Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences.

engage  to be active in creating a happy and meaningful life

gender stereotypes  generalisations (not necessarily accurate) of how individuals of a certain gender should behave or conduct themselves

independence  the ability to think, decide and act for yourself, giving consideration to, but without being adversely influenced by, other factors, pressure, coercion or opinions

interdependent  individual factors have the potential to have an impact on or influence each other

personal identity  the qualities, skills, attitudes and beliefs that make each individual unique

put-down  a comment, attitude or behaviour that is intended to make another person feel bad

responsibility  meeting your obligations towards yourself and others

self-esteem  the way you feel about yourself. High self-esteem means you feel good about yourself and you are confident in your abilities.

self-talk  the thoughts that people have about themselves and their lives

sense of identity  who you are, the way you think about yourself

socialisation  the way we are brought up and expected to behave in society, often based on gender

stereotyped  a standardised mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgement.

values  beliefs about what is important, and what is right or wrong

1.6 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

Multiple choice quiz

Check your understanding:

1. Explain what is meant by a person’s ‘sense of identity’.
2. What is meant by the interdependence of sense of identity, health and wellbeing?
3. Explain how sense of identity impacts on health.
4. Explain how health impacts on sense of identity.
5. Describe how positive thinking can improve your concept of sense of identity.
6. How can you use positive thinking for challenges in your life?
7. Set five goals for yourself and explain how they will help contribute to being the best version of you.
8. How can you support a friend who is experiencing bullying?

Resources

- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.10 Key terms quiz (doc-29279)
- Digital doc: Worksheet 1.11 Multiple choice quiz (doc-29280)
- Digital doc: Key terms glossary (doc-29281)