

What's OK and what's not OK

Year Learning Activity

Description

Students develop their understanding of socially acceptable behaviours and being respectful to others and having respect for themselves by thinking through what's OK and what's not OK in a relationship.

Learning focus

To further develop students' understanding of socially appropriate behaviours and being respectful towards other people. Also, to acknowledge that a range of personal, social and cultural factors influence our emotional responses and sexual behaviours.

Key understandings

- Decisions about sex and relationships are personal and different for different people.
- These decisions may be affected by beliefs, faith, culture, friends, and a desire to fit in.
- The choices we make can change depending on who we are and what's happening around us now.
- Adolescence is a period of dramatic physical, social and emotional change involving many new feelings and experiences.
- Sexual feelings are a normal part of adolescence.
- There are safe and comfortable ways to get to know someone better.

Materials

1. Student Activity Sheet: *What's OK and what's not OK* [one per group]

Teaching and Learning Activities

Before you get started

- Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.
- It is important for the teacher to consider the range of parenting styles, family contexts and cultural backgrounds students may be influenced by. Not all family structures encourage or model values such as respect.
- It is possible that a student has been involved in a traumatic experience relating to sexual abuse. Teachers should know and understand the [protective interrupting](#) technique and what, why, when and how it is needed and used before facilitating this activity. It is important that teachers are familiar with the [Dealing with disclosures](#) teaching notes and have a risk management strategy in place.

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- There are background notes on [STIs/BBVs](#) and [Healthy relationships - Gender, power and consent](#) for further content information related to this activity.

Whole Class

Students understand that decisions about sex and relationships are personal and different for different people. They may be affected by beliefs, faith, culture, friends, and a desire to fit in.

1. Have students form small groups and ask them to share their opinions on the following statements and give reasons for the age they choose. Then share responses with the whole class.

- *What is the right age to have a boyfriend/girlfriend?*
- *What is the right age to have sex (intercourse)?*
- *What is the right age to start using contraception?*
- *What is the right age to have a baby?*
- *What is the right age to get married?*

2. Ask:

- *Did you agree with others in your group about the right age for each statement?*
- *How might your opinion about 'the right age' change as you get older?*
- *What factors do you think might influence your opinions about 'the right age' for each statement? (beliefs, faith, culture, friends, and a desire to fit in)*
- *Where would your parents stand on each statement?*
- *Imagine your parents at the age you are now... how might their answers have been different? Why?*

3. Stress that the decisions we make about relationships and sex are individual and that the choices we make can change depending on who we are and what's happening around us. It is for each person to make choices in his/her own time.

Independent or Small Group

Students develop an understanding of respectful and disrespectful behaviours in a relationship and explore safe and comfortable ways of getting to know someone better.

1. Ask:

- *How do you know when someone likes you?*

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- *How can you show someone you are interested in him/her?*

2. Have students form small groups and give each group a copy of the Student Activity Sheet: *What's OK and what's not OK?*. Students cut the activity sheet into individual cards and then sort them into the following three categories. Share their findings as a whole class.

- OK ways of showing me you like me
- OK ways of showing me you love me
- Ways that disrespect me

Ask:

- *Were there any cards that might have been okay in some situations but not in others?*
- *What would be your top two ways of showing someone you like them?*
- *Do you think this differs for boys and girls? Why?*
- *What are your top two important qualities for a respectful relationship?*
- *To what extent do cultural influences impact on what we might think is okay and what is disrespectful?*
- *To what extent does our prior experience impact on what we might think is okay and what is disrespectful?*
- *To what extent do our personal beliefs and attitudes impact on what we might think is okay and what is disrespectful?*
- *Why is it important for us to be able to understand what a respectful relationship looks like?*
- *Why is it important for us to treat others with respect in a relationship?*
- *Why is it important to respect yourself when you are in a relationship with someone?*
- *What does respecting yourself look/sound/feel like?*

3. Remind students that it is difficult to learn to read the signs when someone likes you, which is why it helps to get to know someone better and why young people might choose not to get emotionally involved at this stage of their lives. Having a good relationship doesn't mean you have to engage in sexual activity such as kissing and touching. Whatever you do, it should always be something you both want to do.

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Reflection

Students complete the following unfinished sentences:

- *My top two important qualities for a respectful relationship are...*
- *The top two ways of showing someone I like them would be...*
- *I think a respectful relationship looks like...*
- *It is important to respect yourself in a relationship because...*

External related resources

[The practical guide to love, sex and relationships](#)

A teaching resource from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

[Topic 4: What to do when you think you like someone](#)

- Respectful and ethical romance
- How to begin a relationship (friendships and potential romantic relationships)
- How to listen

[Topic 5: Why do people kiss?](#)

- Consent for kissing
- Respecting boundaries

[Topic 6: What's OK and what's not OK \(sexual harrassment\)](#)

- What sexual harrassment is
- Help-seeking

Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

Teaching Note

[Establishing a group agreement](#)

[Protective interrupting](#)

[Dealing with disclosures](#)

Background Note

[Respectful relationships: Gender, power and consent](#)

[STIs and BBVs](#)

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