

Changes in relationships

Learning objective

Students discuss the changes that take place in relationships over time and identify feelings and strategies to help and cope with these changes.

Take Home Messages

- People's lives have different stages of growth and development.
- Changes in relationships over time are normal.
- Changes in relationships can bring about different feelings for different people.
- There is a range of strategies to use to cope with changes in relationships.
- People cope with changes in relationships differently.

Curriculum Links

[WA HPE Curriculum](#)

Sub-strand: Personal identity and change

- Ways that individuals and groups adapt to different contexts and situations

Sub-strand: Healthy and active communities

- Strategies that promote a safe, healthy lifestyle

Sub-strand: Interacting with others

- Skills and strategies to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- Ways in which inappropriate emotional response impact on relationships

[International technical guidance on sexuality education](#)

Key concept 1.1: Families

- Health and illness can affect families in terms of their structure, capacities and responsibilities.

Key concept 1.2 Friendship, love and romantic relationships

- Friendship and love help people feel positive about themselves

Key concept 5.5: Finding help and support

- There are different sources of help and support in the school and the wider community.

Materials

- Student Activity Sheet: [Changes in relationships](#) [one per group]
- Student Activity Sheet: [Deal with it banana split](#) [one per student]

Before You Get Started

- Be mindful that discussing significant changes in the family's routine, structure or dynamic might

bring up issues for students (e.g. separation or divorce; or death of a parent, grandparent or pet).

- It is important for the teacher to consider and affirm a range of parenting styles, family contexts and cultural backgrounds students may describe, to ensure the traditional family structure is not held up as the 'norm', or the only or best way.
- Teachers should know and understand the [protective interrupting](#) technique, and what, why, when and how it is needed and used, before facilitating this activity.

Learning Activities

Group agreement

5 min

Teaching tip: A group agreement must be established before any Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) program begins to ensure a safe learning environment. Read [Essential Tool: Establishing a group agreement](#) for tips on how to create one and what to include.

1. Revise or create the class [group agreement](#).

Learning Activities

Good changes and bad changes

25 mins

2. Divide the class into small groups. Ask them to consider changes they have experienced in their lives within their family and friendships, e.g. new baby in the family, pet dying, starting a new school, joining a new sporting team, family break-up or the death of a grandparent. Stress that changes in relationships over time are a normal part of life.
3. Have groups complete the Student Activity Sheet: Changes in relationships listing 'Good changes in relationships' and 'Not-so-good changes in relationships'.
4. Once this has been completed, ask the groups to cut the sheet into half: the 'Good changes in relationships' column and the 'Not-so-good changes in relationships' column.
 - Now cut the responses to the 'Good changes in relationships' column into single cards and put them in order, with the best change first.
 - Ask each group to share their top two responses with the class. Discuss the similarities and differences.
5. Ask:

How do things in the 'good changes' column make us feel?

(excited, happy, warm, connected, like we belong, proud)

How do things in the 'Not-so-good changes' column make us feel?

(sad, angry, nervous, powerless, agitated)

How could we support our friends when they have experienced 'Good changes' in their family and friends?

(celebrate, be happy with them, let them talk about the good things, ask for more information)

How could we support our friends when they have experienced 'Not-so-good changes' in their family and friends?

(let them talk, be nice to them, do nice things with them, spend with them)

How could we support our family when they have experienced 'Good changes'?

(celebrate, be happy with them, let them talk about the good things, ask for more information)

How could we support our family when they have experienced 'Not-so-good' changes'?

(make them something to feel special, spend time with them)

6. Now cut the responses to the 'Not-so-good changes in relationships' column into single cards and arrange these in order from most to least difficult.
 - Ask each group to share two responses (those which are most difficult) and discuss the similarities and differences.
7. Groups select three or four of their 'Not-so-good changes' cards and change the statements into a question. For example, the statement 'The first day at a new school' could become 'What can I do to cope with the first day at a new school?'. Students write the question at the top of a piece of paper.
8. Have each group brainstorm and record the strategies or advice they would use for dealing with, or helping someone else deal with, this change in relationship.

Learning Activities

Banana split

20 mins

9. Independently, students reflect on a significant change that has occurred in their own family or friendships, it may be one they included in the previous activity.
10. Introduce the 'Banana Split' strategy by showing page 1 of the Student Activity Sheet: Deal with it banana split as a poster or PowerPoint slide. Explain the sections to be completed independently:
 - Cheerful Cherry: Changes in relationships are a normal part of growing up. There is hope for the future. Write a hopeful message to yourself.
 - Rainbow Sprinkles: Bad times don't last forever. Write down 2 two great things that have happened to you since this event.
 - Ooey-Gooney Sauce Feelings: Intense feelings are normal in these situations. Name feelings you have had or are still having.
 - Cool Down Ice-cream: Stay cool, stay calm. Write 1 way you could calm your body in this situation.
 - Tough as Nuts: It's always good to talk to others in these situations. Who could you talk to feel better or who did you talk to?
 - Cool Down Ice-cream: Stay cool, stay calm. Write one other way you could calm your body in this situation.
 - Bendable Banana: Write the one 'Not-so-good change' you have experienced and some of the things you have done to cope (or try to cope) with this change.
11. Provide each student with a copy of page 2 of the Student Activity Sheet: Deal with it banana split and discuss.
12. Students complete the worksheet independently, using one significant change that has occurred in their own family or friendship group.

3-2-1 Reflection

Reflection

10 mins

13. Have students share their Banana split responses with others in a small group.
14. Ask:
 - What are some useful things that people thought, or did that helped them cope with a 'Not so good change'? (their bendable bananas)
 - What are some useful things people did to calm their bodies down in these situations? (their cool down ice cream)
 - Who were some helpful people to talk to in these situations? (their tough as nuts)
 - What were some common feelings that people had in these situations? (their ooey-gooney sauce)
 - What were some positive self-talk messages that people came up with? (their cherry on the top)
15. Highlight that everybody deals with significant change and loss differently and that's okay. It is important that our sadness or anger does not hurt other people. Thinking about how to cope with our pain can help with this.

Health Promoting Schools

Background teacher note: [Health promoting schools framework](#).

Education

Professional development

- Ensure all staff are aware of school policy and legal obligations to report suspected/confirmed abuse.

Environment

Policy and procedure

- Ensure there are clear policies and procedure for staff on reporting suspected/confirmed abuse
- Ensure it is clear where to report suspected/confirmed child sexual abuse. Is there a link saved on every teacher's computer or signage in common teacher areas?

Partnerships

Family

- [Talk Soon. Talk Often: a guide for parents talking to their kids about sex](#) is a free hardcopy resource that can be bulk ordered by schools and [website](#). Send a copy home to parents prior to starting your RSE program. The booklet offers ages and stage related information on puberty (and other topics) so that parents can reinforce the topics covered in class. ([How to order hard copies](#).) Provide the link to parents on school websites and social media.
- Order copies of [Puberty](#) and [Relationships, sex and other stuff](#) to be sent home for parents. Provide the link to parents on school websites and social media.
- Consider giving parents and family an additional heads-up for this lesson as you will be

discussing bad changes or experiences.

- Run a parent workshop and run this activity with parents to model the content that will be covered in your RSE program.
- Run a parent and child evening session, where the children can teach the parents what they have been learning about.

School staff

- Invite the school nurse to your class to answer some of the question box questions. This serves two purposes - they may be able to answer some of the questions you are unsure of and helps to build a relationship between the students and the nurse.
- The school nurse may like to take small groups of students requiring additional or specialised care to run separate activities with on this topic.

Understanding influences on behaviour

Learning objective

Students explore how family, peers and the media influence how individuals interact in a given situation.

Take Home Messages

- We interact with different people in different ways.
- Communities can be diverse.
- Feeling connected to a community is good for a person's wellbeing.
- Influence or pressure can be both a positive thing and a negative thing.
- Pressure can be external (when friends, family or people in the media do or say things to persuade us to do something they want) or internal (when we put pressure on ourselves to behave in a certain way).
- Individuals may place internal pressure on themselves to conform to a group.

Materials

- 8 pieces of butcher's paper
- Student Activity Sheet: [No pressure!](#) [one per pair]

Before You Get Started

- This activity is an introduction to the Year 6 activity [Peer influence](#).
- Teachers should know and understand the [protective interrupting](#) technique and what, why, when and how it is needed and used.
- Students may have questions that they feel uncomfortable to ask. Providing a [question box](#) for students to place their questions in anonymously will ensure their questions are answered in a safe environment.

Learning Activities

Whole Class

Students develop an understanding of influence or pressure and identify that it can be both positive and

negative, and that individuals also place internal pressure on themselves to conform to a group.

1. Place sheets of the butcher's paper around the room with the following 8 headings:
 - Positive things my friends have influenced me to do.
 - Negative things my friends have influenced me to do.
 - Positive things my brother/sister has influenced me to do.
 - Negative things my brother/sister has influenced me to do.
 - Positive things my Mum/Dad has influenced me to do.
 - Negative things my Mum/Dad has influenced me to do.
 - Things I have seen in the media that have influenced me to do something positive.
 - Things I have seen in the media that have influenced me to do something negative.
2. Explain to students that they will be conducting a [graffiti walk](#). Split students into 8 groups.
 - Give an example for each graffiti sheet to ensure that students understand the task first.
 - Each group walks around the room with a nominated scribe writing down responses.
 - Tell students to place a tick next to a comment if it was something that they would have written.
3. Review the completed sheets as a whole class and identify the most common responses on each sheet (as identified by the number of ticks). Whiteboard these or highlight the top responses on the sheet.
4. Ask:
 - How does it feel to be influenced in a negative way to do something?
 - How does it feel to be influenced in a positive way to do something?
 - Which influences are easier to handle? Positive ones or negative ones. Why?
 - How can you avoid some of the negative influences? (using positive self-talk, using optimistic thinking, choosing different friends, gaining some knowledge or skills, being assertive)
 - Have you heard of the term 'peer pressure' before? What do you think it means?
 - Give one example each of when peer pressure can be a good and/or a bad thing. Why?
 - Why do some young people give in to negative peer pressure?
 - What sorts of things do our families/friends do or say to influence us to behave in a certain way?
 - What kinds of relationships do we see modelled in the media representing young people?
 - What messages do you think young people take from these and how might they change the way they behave?
 - Is this a realistic representation of relationships that exist in real life?
 - How does access to digital media and the internet on devices such as mobile phones affect young people's relationships with each other? How can you make sure you maintain healthy relationships using these media?
 - Do you think your family or your friends have more influence over how you behave?
 - How might this change as you get older?
 - Do you sometimes feel pressured to do something even though your family or friends may not have said or done anything to pressure you? In other words, the pressure is something you create for yourself with certain self-talk? (e.g. young people often feel like they need to wear the same clothes or have the same hairstyles as their friends, or smoke or drink with their friends, so they 'fit in' even though their friends may not have put any pressure on them to conform.)
5. Explain that influence or pressure can be both a positive thing and a negative thing, e.g. your friends can influence you to smoke and also not to smoke.
6. Explain that pressure can be external (when friends, family or people in the media do or say things to persuade us to do something they want) or internal (when we put pressure on ourselves to behave in a certain way, perhaps to please or be like friends, family or people in the media).
 - Ask for examples of both internal and external pressure.
7. Ask students to re-group and examine one graffiti sheet. The group decides whether the

influence in each situation is external (things other people say or do) or internal (thoughts that put pressure on ourselves), and also whether the influence is positive or negative. Different attitudes may result in conflicting answers!

Independent or Small Group

Students demonstrate their understanding of influence (both positive and negative; internal and external) and consider positive self-talk they could use to protect their safety and wellbeing.

1. Whiteboard examples of pro-social, positive behaviour, e.g. riding on a cycle path; playing fairly; not cheating. Discuss the positive influences of family and friends to do these behaviours or the negative influences not to do these things.
2. Whiteboard examples of anti-social, negative behaviour, e.g. wagging school; not wearing a bike helmet; smoking cigarettes; writing graffiti. Discuss the negative influences of family and friends to do these behaviours or the positive influences not to do these things.
3. Explain the Student Activity Sheet: No pressure! and have students complete in pairs.

3-2-1 Reflection

1. Have students journal or write a personal reflection about the results of the graffiti sheet activity.
2. Have students form a [sharing circle](#). Using their activity sheet, complete the following:
 - Place a green tick against the things that you think help make happy, safe communities. Give reasons why.
 - Place a red cross against the things that you think don't help make happy, safe communities. Give reasons why.
3. Ask:
 - What is the most useful self-talk to 'do the right thing' in each situation?
 - Which situation do you think your friends have the most influence over your behaviour?
 - Which situation do you think your family have the most influence over your behaviour?
 - Which situations would you find the most difficult to manage? Why?
 - Which situations would you find the easiest to manage? Why?
 - Why do you think it's useful to consider who and what influences our behaviour?

Consent: Looks like, sounds like, feels like

Learning objective

Students discuss and learn about the ways that consent can be communicated including verbal and physical cues.

Take Home Messages

- Consent involves both verbal communication and body language.
- You should ask other people if it is okay to touch them and listen to what they tell you.
- You can say no to other people, including adults.

Materials

- Butchers paper
- Coloured pens - enough for each student

Before You Get Started

Before you get started

- [Protective interrupting](#) - Teachers need to know and understand how to use this technique to prevent students from potentially disclosing sensitive information or abuse in front of other students.
- [Dealing with disclosures](#) - Teachers must be aware of the school and legal procedures if a student discloses personal issues, particularly disclosures of sexual abuse.

Learning Activities

Consent communication brainstorm

1. Discuss: How consent can be communicated in lots of different ways. It's not just saying yes or no so it's important to make sure that you are aware and think about all the ways people can say yes or no.

2. Ask: What are some situations where you need to ask for consent or give consent?3. Using a grouping strategy, divider the group into 6 groups. Give each group a piece of butcher's paper and pens. Each group to brainstorm one of the following, what:

- Giving consent looks like
 - Not giving consent looks like
 - Giving consent sounds like
 - Not giving consent sounds like
 - Giving consent feels like
 - Not giving consent feels like
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- Once groups have had adequate time to brainstorm (roughly 15 minutes), encourage everyone to walk around and add their own thoughts to the other pieces of butcher's paper.

4. Ask someone from each group to share what they brainstormed or discussed.

Teaching tip: If not mentioned naturally in sharing discussions make sure to mention- Sometimes people can "freeze" if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe. This might mean they don't move or respond verbally, so it's important to know that no response is also a no response. - Some people do not communicate verbally, so understanding their non-verbal cues are important to understanding when and how they consent.

Learning Activities

Consent clarification

Assign each corner of the room as A, B or C. A = Yes they consent, B = No they don't consent, and C= Unsure if they consent so would need to clarify.

5. ? Ask students to stand in the corner that they think is correct when answering the following questions:

- You ask your Mum if they want an ice cream, they shake their head from side to side and pull a disgusted looking face.
 - You ask a friend if they love Taylor Swift and they start playing one of her songs loudly off of their phone.
 - You ask your sister if you can borrow their new top and they say “umm duh, what do you think?”
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- You text your boyfriend/girlfriend and ask if they want to come over after school and they send you back a party emoji and say “sounds good, can’t wait”.

Teaching tip: You can adjust the examples to use different language terms to be culturally inclusive or mention communication devices or sign language to be more disability inclusive.

3-2-1 Reflection

- How can you clarify if you are unsure if someone consents?
- Was there anything new that you learned or were surprised by today?
- What is one thing we talked about today that you'd share with a friend or family member?

Health Promoting Schools

- In school newsletters, include a question similar to those in the consent clarification game that offers an A, B or C answer so that students and families can discuss and share their thoughts on different situations and circumstances.
- Ask the drama and arts teachers if they can draw upon plays or art pieces that portray consent related scenarios to imbed for cross sectional knowledge.
- Ask sport teachers to discuss how we show consent in sport i.e. shaking head, crossing hands, saying don't pass etc.