

Years P-2 Respectful Relationships Understandings

Introducing students to the idea of what a safe and respectful relationship looks like, will enable us to develop an understanding in students of what to act like, look like, sound like, know and can do in such a relationship.

Explain to students that most of their relationships are respectful. They should feel that they are treated equally, fairly and that their ideas are listened to.

Following are questions for you for talk with students about in class and at home about respectful relationships.

Questions to reflect on	I will share and draw my thoughts
Who are people in my life that I have a relationship with?	
What things do people do to make a good relationship?	
How can I show respect for other people in a relationship?	
How can I tell if a situation is unsafe and when don't I keep a secret?	
How can I react and respond to a situation when I feel uncomfortable and unsafe?	
Who are the people who keep me safe and who I can ask for help when I feel uncomfortable or unsafe?	
How can I ask for and get help when I feel unsafe or have problems?	

As described in *Helpful Messages for Parents and Teachers*, the first two stages of young children's social-emotional intelligence development are self-control and self-awareness. To assist students to learn about what healthy friendships and relationships look like, this section is about reinforcing the above two stages and introducing activities to develop the third stage, which is understanding others or empathy.

Whole class talks about the activities which follow will begin students' journey towards valuing their relationships.

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: EMOTIONAL LITERACY – learning about your feelings.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your ideas
Your feelings are called your emotions and they can be positive (happy) or negative (not so happy). Let's name at least five of each of these types of emotions. A positive, then a negative, then a positive	
How do you know what emotions other people are feeling? Explain to students what body language is. Show the type of body language you could show if you felt happy, sad, excited, lonely, loved, angry, proud and frustrated.	
For each of the above emotions, answer, how does your tummy feel? How do your shoulders feel? How do your eyes and face look? How do your legs feel? Also, for these emotions, what is something that could make you feel that way?	
For different emotions, peoples' voices sound different. How do happy students sound in the playground? How do angry students sound? How does it make you feel when you hear others sounding happy? Sounding angry?	
What facial body language signs tell you how others are feeling? Read a story or show a video to students and ask them to guess and name the different emotions characters could be feeling.	

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: PERSONAL STRENGTHS – learning about your strengths.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your strengths
You all have your own special strengths. To work well together in class and play happily in your group in the playground, what things should you all try to do to help each other? Explain that their strengths help them build and use these skills to have healthy relationships.	
There are three very special strengths which help you to be happy and help others. They are gratitude – saying thank you, kindness – doing good things for others, and bravery – knowing what is the right thing to do and doing it. Share times you have shown each of these emotions.	
Being brave is also having a go at something you are afraid of. Everyone is scared of doing something, but doing it anyway will fill you with great feelings. Draw a picture of yourself doing something brave.	

Share how you would feel brave if these things happened, 1. You tried something new? 2. You got left out? 3. Talked to an adult for the first time? 4. Get lost? 5. Played with a new friend? 6. Ate a food you hadn't tried before?

From the following strengths choose five you think you could have, patient, kind, hard-working, thankful, caring, calm, playful, good listener, fair, polite, helpful, generous, neat, determined, interested, good-sport, thoughtful.

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: POSITIVE COPING – learning how to control your emotions.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your ideas
Show how you would look when you feel happy, then sad, then excited, then proud, then lonely. Call out one of the emotions and students have to act out their body language. This role playing normalises showing emotions for them.	
Explain that positive self-talk is when they talk to themselves in their heads to help them do things they find hard. Help them to create ten "I can and I will" self-talk statements.	
Help them to make up positive "I can and I will" statements they can use to make themselves feel better when they feel negative emotions.	
To teach students how to self-calm themselves, begin by showing them how to breathe deeply. Ask them to sit quietly and breathe for a minute and increase it a little each time.	
Ask students to lie on their backs, close their eyes, breathe deeply and think of their favourite toys, relatives or pets for a minute. Increase it a little each time.	

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: PROBLEM SOLVING – learning about problems, what causes them and how to solve them.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your ideas
Explain to students that their class is going to have picnic lunch at the local playground. Lead a brainstorm on what they need to do and what to take. Then ask what would happen if they forgot each of the things, introducing the idea of problems and that they are a normal part of life.	
What happens in the playground when some students are not fair or kind? List the problems these type of behaviours could cause for other students.	
Ask students to think about the choices they make on how to behave could affect other people. List their thoughts and whether they are fair and kind?	

What do other students do when they are friendly in class and in the playground? What do other students do when they are not friendly in class and in the playground?	
How do you feel when someone decides to be friendly to you? How do you feel when you decide to be friendly to someone else?	

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: STRESS MANAGEMENT – learning about how to handle what worries you.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your ideas
To relax, stand up quietly, and wiggle your toes, wobble your calves, then your quads, then your bottom, your tummy, your fingers and arms, your chest, your shoulders, your head.	
After doing this how calm do you feel? List responses. This is something you could to self-calm yourself anytime you wish.	
When we are angry and worried about something we are not relaxed or calm. Share things we could do to make us feel calm again.	
How do you feel when these things happen? 1. You have no one to play with? 2. The big students won't share the equipment 3. You broke a friend's toy? 4. You left your jumper at school? 5. Your friend won't stop teasing you?	
For each of the above, think about what you are afraid of? What can you do to help yourself feel better?	

Respectful Relationship Ingredient: HELP SEEKING – learning about the best people to ask for help for different problems.

Questions to discuss and reflect on	Draw how you feel and your ideas
Share happy things that happened and the people who you told about them. Share unhappy things that happened and the people who you told about them.	
What did you say to share the happy things? What did you say to share the unhappy things?	
When unhappy things happen, they are called problems. To feel happy again quickly, the best thing to do is to ask an adult you trust to help you. At home who could you ask? At school who could you ask?	
There are always people there for you to ask for help. For each of these problems who could you ask? 1. Left your lunch at home? 2. No one to play with? 3. You lost your jumper? 4. Mum is late to pick you up? 5. Afraid of grade 4s? 6. Doing long jump in athletics?	
For each of the above problems what could you say to ask for help?	

There are two further Respectful Relationships Ingredients called *Gender and Identity* and *Positive Gender Relations* which are not covered in the scope of this journal.

Acknowledgement: Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne