



Peer
Education
Project



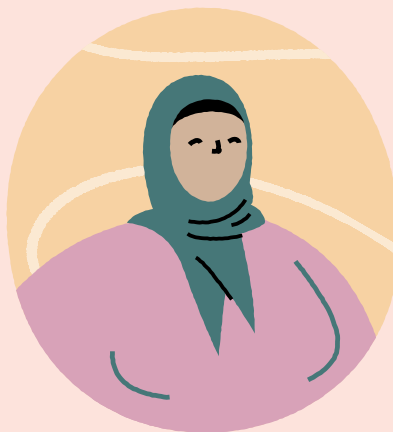
Mental Health
Foundation



HEALTHY

RELATIONSHIPS

with our
peers



Lesson

Lesson plan:

- **Welcome**
Slides 1 & 2 7
- **Being in the moment**
Slide 3 9
- **Building connections**
Slide 4 10
- **Introducing the topic**
Slides 5-7 12
- **Learning through activity**
Slide 8-12 15
- **Reflecting on the learning**
Slides 13-17 21
- **Being in the moment**
Slide 18 24

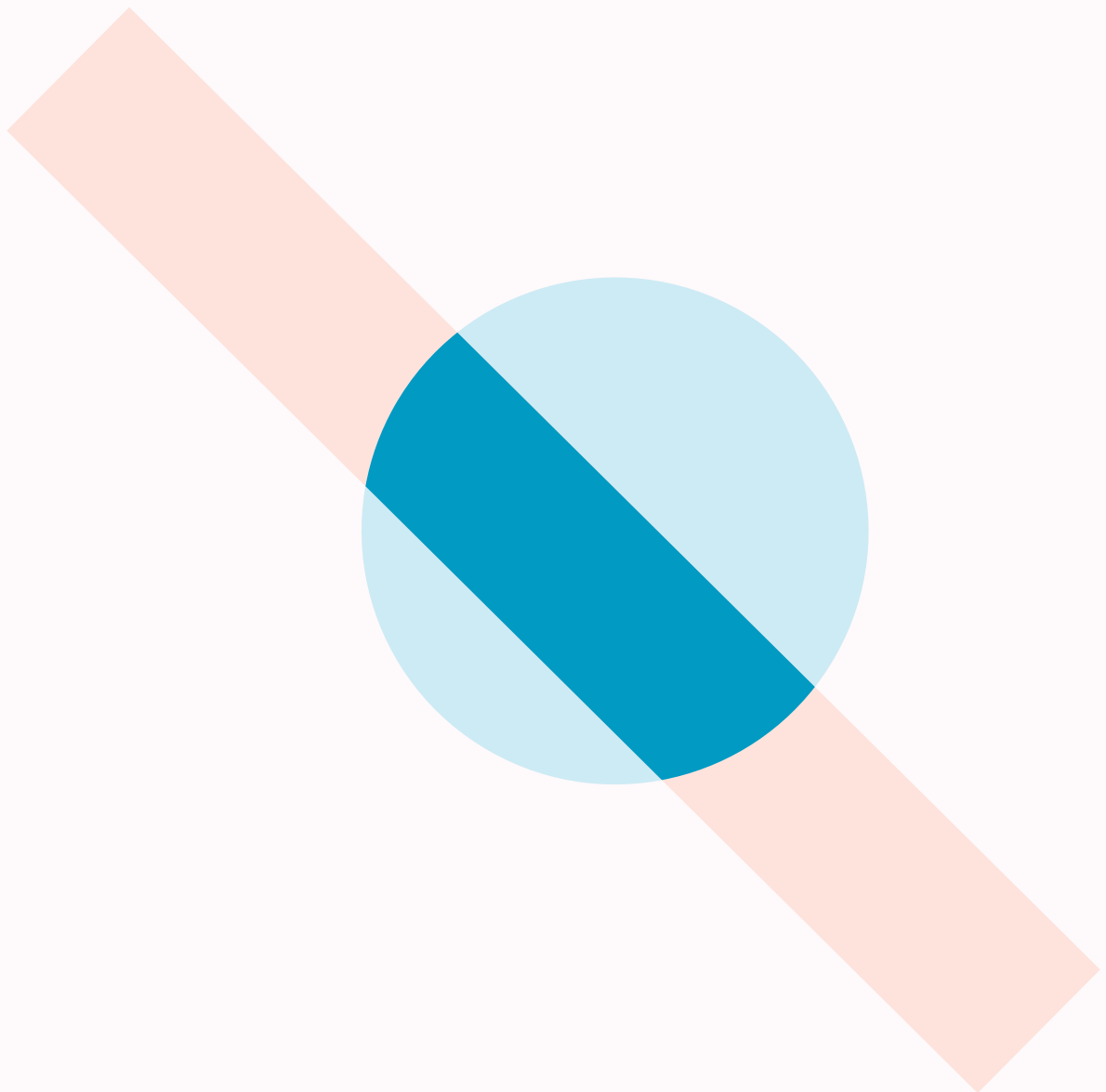
A L T E R N A T I V E A C T I V I T I E S

- **Taking action**
Slides 20-22 27
- **Challenging thinking**
Slide 23-26 31
- **Resources**
Communication skills worksheet 35
Reflection worksheet 36



This lesson has been developed from the Mental Health Foundation's Peer Education Project (PEP) - a secondary school-based, educational programme that aims to give young people the skills and knowledge they need to safeguard their mental health and that of their peers. PEP is a carefully researched, effective approach to mental health education whereby older pupils within school or college deliver mental health lessons to younger pupils.

For more information about PEP and how your school can get involved, [click here](#).



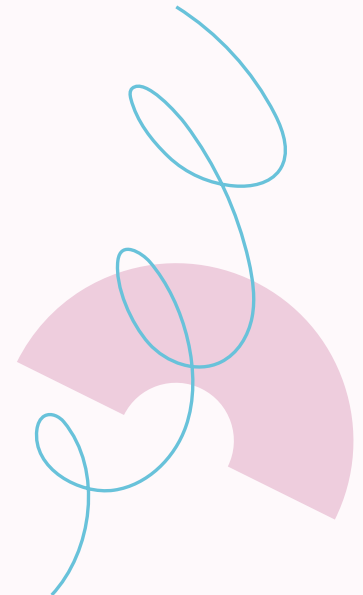


Lesson aims:

- To understand some of the key factors that make our relationships with our peers healthy.
- To develop our communication skills in having difficult conversations.
- To consider ways to support ourselves, and others, by exploring what we can and cannot control.

Resources checklist:

- PowerPoint slides
- Paper and pens
- OPTIONAL: Communication skills worksheet
- OPTIONAL: Reflection worksheet
- OPTIONAL: Pens and paper



Preparation checklist:

- Plan two 'Being in the moment' activities, referring to the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#).
- Plan a 'Building connections' activity, referring to the [Ice Breaker Activities Pack](#).



How to use the lesson plan:

This lesson plan is designed to be delivered by pupils aged 15 and upwards (known as Peer Educators) to pupils aged 11 to 14 (known as Peer Learners).

The recommended lesson plan is primarily suited for pupils aged 11 or 12 and can be delivered as a 50-minute lesson or two 30-minute lessons.

The revised lesson plan offers alternative activities related to taking social action or challenging mental health information. The revised lesson plan provides pupils, particularly those who are older or who already have basic mental health awareness, an opportunity to explore the topics in more depth.

Recommended lesson plan 50 Minutes	Recommended lesson structure 2x 30 Minutes		Revised lesson plan 50 Minutes
	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	
Welcome 5 Minutes	Welcome 5 Minutes		Welcome 5 Minutes
Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes
Building connections 5 Minutes	Building connections 5 Minutes		Select either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the 'Taking action' section; or • the 'Challenging thinking' section. 25 Minutes
Introducing the topic 10 Minutes	Introducing the topic 10 Minutes		
Learning through activity 10 Minutes		Learning through activity 10 Minutes	Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes
Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes		Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes	
Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes	Being in the moment 5 Minutes

If the lesson is being delivered by Peer Educators, as per the Peer Education Project model, each activity is recommended to be delivered either by Peer Educators or School Staff.

How to do it:

The instructions for each activity are split into these steps:



Actions required such as presenting slides or handing resources out.

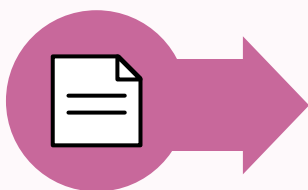


Key messages and activity instructions to be said.



Questions to be asked to extend the discussion or gauge understanding.

Notes and troubleshooting:



There is additional information to support lesson delivery such as activity adaptations, considerations for classroom management, and key preparations for the lesson.

It's not a script:

The lesson plan is not a word-for-word script. Prior to delivery, preparation time should be allocated to make key notes and plan how each activity will run.

Welcome 5 mins

Resources needed: • Slides 1 & 2



Slide 1



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HEALTHY

RELATIONSHIPS

with our peers

Lesson



Do:

Present Slide 1.

Welcome the class and the Peer Educators to the lesson. Explain that the Peer Educators will be leading some of the activities during the lesson – an opportunity for Peer Learners to get to know them and learn from those who are similar in age.



Say:

"In this lesson, we are going to explore tools to help us build healthy relationships with our peers."



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Ways of working



SLIDE 2

We will:

1. Respect and listen to each other, giving space for everyone to be heard.
2. Value everyone's opinion, even if it's different to yours.
3. Ask questions, especially if you are unsure about the information or activities.
4. Be kind to yourself and others, reaching out for support if you need it.

Any others? _____

Click to add text



Do:

Present Slide 2.



Say:

"It is important for us all to feel safe and confident to share our thoughts, ideas and questions in this lesson."



Do:

Read out the slide and ask the Peer Learners and the Peer Educators for any other points they would like to add. Write them directly on the slide.



Notes and troubleshooting

Variations: It can be useful to have the 'Ways of Working' list visible throughout the lesson. You could write these on a board or poster paper to display in each lesson.



Being in the moment 5 mins



Resources needed: • Slide 3
• A mindfulness activity

Slide 3

Being in the moment



SLIDE 3



Do: Present Slide 3.



Say: "We're going to start with a short exercise to bring our focus to this lesson."



Do: Read out the mindfulness activity you have chosen.



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: Select a mindfulness exercise from the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#). You may want to explain what mindfulness is to the pupils.



Building connections 5 mins



Resources needed: • Slide 4
• An ice breaker activity

Slide 4

Building connections



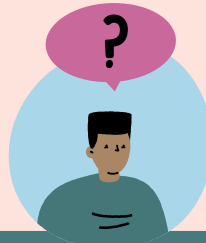
SLIDE 4

Types of communication:



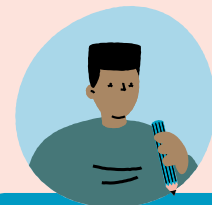
Charade:

Act out without using any sounds.



Articulate:

Describe the word on the piece of paper, without saying the actual word.



Drawing:

Draw the word on the board.

Recommended ice breaker



Say:

"Today's welcome exercise is designed to get us thinking about the way we communicate with others, and how it is important to find what works for us and what works best for our peers."



Do:

Present Slide 4.
Arrange pupils into pairs or small groups.



Say:

"In your pairs or groups, you will take it in turns to share with your partner or group an activity you enjoy doing to look after your mental health and wellbeing. For example, baking cupcakes, dancing or walking in the park."

Continued...



Building connections (continued)



"You can do this as:

- **A charade:** Act out the activity without using any sounds.
- **An articulate:** Describe the word on the piece of paper, without saying the word written.
- **A drawing:** Draw the activity without using any letters or numbers.

You can pick whichever type of communication you prefer to share your activity. Your peers will then have to try and guess what activity you are communicating. You will have 30 seconds."



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: This recommended ice breaker activity is directly relevant to the lesson content. However, you can select an alternative activity from the [Ice Breaker Activities Pack](#).



Introducing the topic 10 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 5-7

Slide 5

Introducing the topic

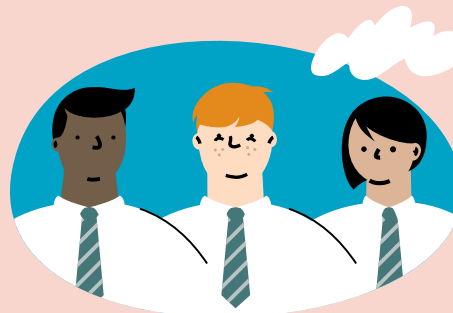


SLIDE 5



Our peers play an important role in how we experience a sense of belonging.

Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness.



Present Slide 5.



“Our peers are people that are similar in age to us and involved in the same activities or spaces. For example, as a class you are all peers as you are taking part in this lesson together.

Our peers play an important role in how we experience our sense of belonging. Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness.”



Introducing the topic (continued)

Slide 6

Introducing the topic



SLIDE 6



What could healthy relationships with our peers look like?

Click to add text



Do:

Present Slide 6.



Ask:

"What could healthy relationships with our peers look like?"



Do:

Invite pupils to share their ideas and write them on the slide.

Time to discuss: 5 minutes.



Introducing the topic (continued)

Slide 7

Introducing the topic



SLIDE 7

Relationships with our peers can change over time, in response to our experiences and circumstances, and as we learn what we need from our relationships.



Do:

Present Slide 7.



Say:

“Healthy relationships with our peers can take time to build, and are based on kindness, honesty, mutual respect, trust, and open communication.

Relationships with our peers can change over time, in response to our experiences and circumstances, and as we learn what we need from our relationships. It is important for us to be honest with ourselves, and with our peers, about how we feel about the relationships. This can feel challenging.

If our relationships with our peers are making us feel like we aren't good enough, we can't be ourselves or our peers say and do unkind things to us, then it is important to recognise these feelings and speak to a trusted adult about them.”

Continued...



Learning through activity 10 mins



Resources needed:

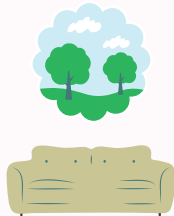
- Slides 8-12
- Pens and paper (optional)
- Communication skills worksheet (optional)

Slide 8

Learning through activity



SLIDE 8



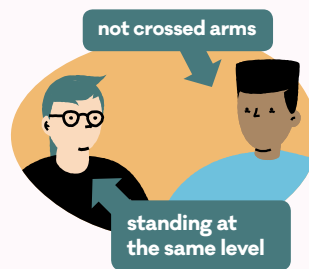
1. Setting

How to have difficult conversations:

I feel...

I want to share

2. Conversation starters



3. Body language

Thank you for listening

4. Conversation endings



Present Slide 8.



"In our relationships with our peers, how we communicate is an important part of how we can build a healthy relationship.

One way we can have healthy relationships with our peers, is by having open and honest communication. Sometimes, sharing how we are feeling can be difficult, especially if it is about the relationship.

We are now going to do an exercise on how to best support ourselves and our peers when having difficult conversations."



Learning through activity (continued)

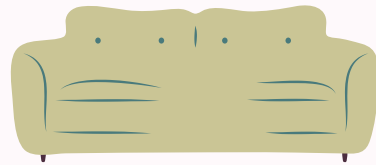
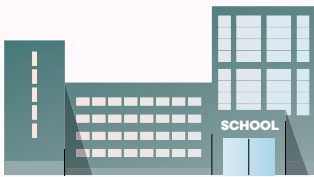
Slide 9

Learning through activity



SLIDE 9

Where would you feel most comfortable to have a conversation with someone?



Do: Present Slide 9.



Ask: “Where would you feel most comfortable to have a conversation with someone?”



Do: Invite Peer Learners to share with class. They can write down their own individual answers on a piece of paper.



Learning through activity (continued)

Slide 10

Learning through activity



SLIDE 10

What could you say to start the conversation?

I feel...

I want
to share



Do:

Present Slide 10.



Ask:

"What could you say to start the conversation?"



Do:

Invite Peer Learners to share with class. They can write down their own individual answers on a piece of paper.



Learning through activity (continued)

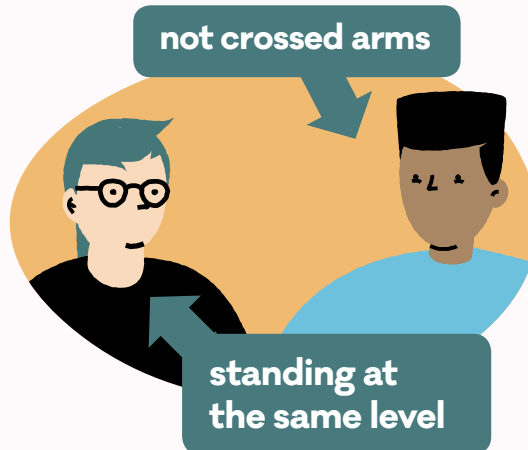
Slide 11

Learning through activity



SLIDE 11

How can we show we are listening and engaged with our body language?



Present Slide 11.



“How can we show we are listening and engaged with our body language?”



Invite Peer Learners to share with class. They can write down their own individual answers on a piece of paper.



Learning through activity (continued)

Slide 12

Learning through activity



SLIDE 12

How could you end the conversation?

**Thank you
for listening**



Do:

Present Slide 12.



Ask:

"How could you end the conversation?"



Do:

Invite Peer Learners to share with class. They can write down their own individual answers on a piece of paper.



Say:

"We can now use these skills when we are approaching a difficult conversation with our peers.

These tools may not be able to influence what is said by the other person or the outcome of the conversation, but may help us to feel more confident and comfortable talking to our peers about difficult topics."

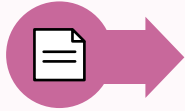
Continued...



Learning through activity (continued)



"It is important when someone has shared their feelings with us that we are respectful towards them, even if we don't agree with what they have said."



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: If using the worksheet, print copies ahead of the lesson and hand out to Peer Learners for this activity.

Classroom management: If using the worksheet, ask pupils to add their ideas to each box.



Reflecting on the learning 10 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 13-17 • Pens and paper
• Reflection worksheet (optional) (optional)

Slide 13

Reflecting on the learning



SLIDE 13

One thing I have learned.



One thing I will do differently.



One question I would like an answer to.



Do:

Present Slide 13.



Say:

"Spend two minutes thinking about these reflection statements:

- One thing I have learned.
- One thing I will do differently.
- One question I would like an answer to."



Do:

Invite pupils to share their reflection with the class for each statement. Write their responses on Slides 14-16.



Reflecting on the learning (continued)



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: If using the worksheet, print copies ahead of the lesson and hand out to Peer Learners for this activity.

Classroom management: Their comment, question or thought doesn't have to be about mental health – it can be about the lesson itself, the activities, how it went, etc.

If using the worksheet, ask the Peer Learners to write down their reflections.

Follow-up: Collate any questions that weren't answered, and follow-up with responses to the pupils in the next lesson.



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Reflecting on the learning (continued)

Slide 17

Lesson summary



SLIDE 17

A healthy relationship is one built through kindness, mutual respect, trust, honesty, and open communication.



It can take time to connect with ourselves and our peers, learning our different boundaries, communication styles and interests.



By building positive connections, we can look after our mental health and wellbeing, and establish a support network around us.



Do:

Present Slide 17.

Read out the lesson summary.



Being in the moment 5 mins



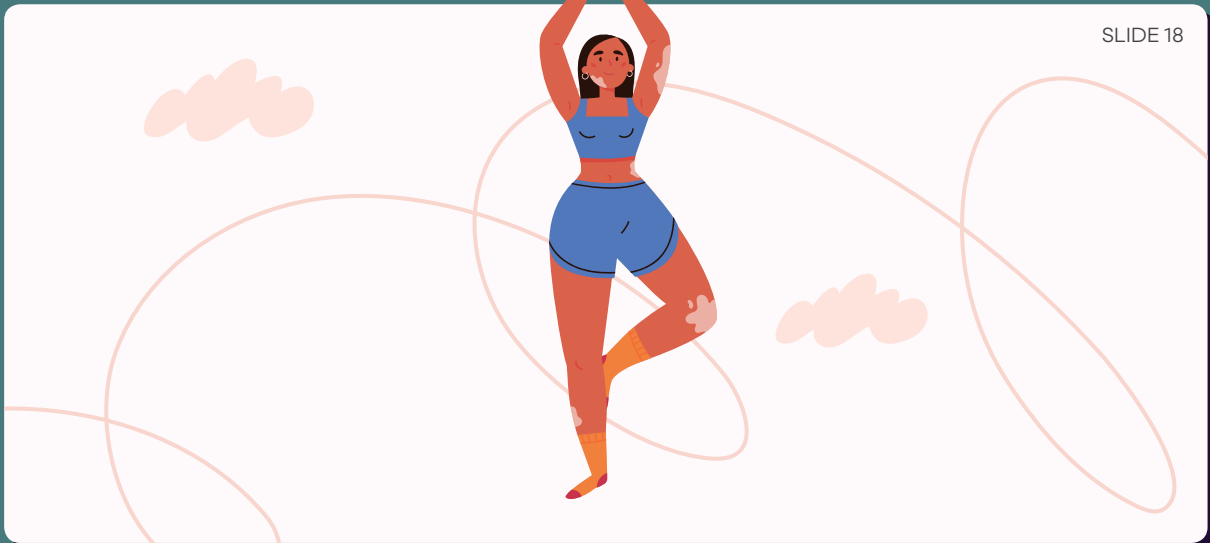
Resources needed: • Slide 18
• A mindfulness activity

Slide 14

Being in the moment



SLIDE 18



Do:

Present Slide 18.



Say:

"We'll finish the lesson with another short mindfulness exercise."



Do:

Read out the mindfulness activity you have chosen.



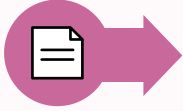
Say:

"That's the end of the lesson. Thank you everyone for your contributions."

Continued...



Being in the moment (continued)



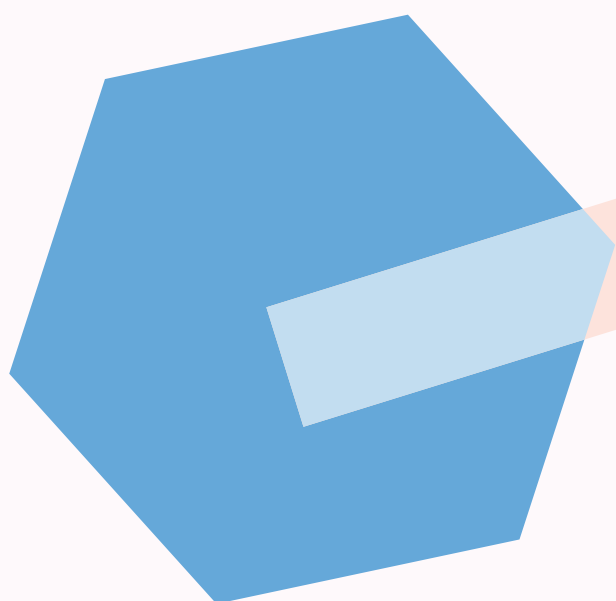
Notes and troubleshooting:

Prepare: Select a mindfulness exercise from the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#).





Alternative activities



Taking action 25 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 20-22
• Pens and paper

Slide 20

Taking action

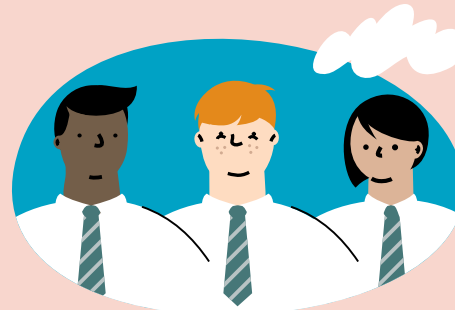


SLIDE 20



Our peers play an important role in how we experience a sense of belonging.

Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness.



Present Slide 20.



"Our peers are people that are similar in age to us and involved in the same activities or spaces. For example, as a class you are all peers as you are taking part in this lesson together.

Our peers play an important role in how we experience our sense of belonging in school. Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness."



Taking action



SLIDE 21



Do:

Present Slide 21.



Ask:

"What do healthy relationships with our peers look like and what can we do to maintain those relationships?"



Do:

Invite pupils to share their ideas.

Time to discuss: 5 minutes.



Say:

"In our relationships with our peers, how we communicate is an important part of how we can build a healthy relationship.

One way we can have healthy relationships with our peers, is by having open and honest communication. Sometimes, sharing how we are feeling can be difficult, especially if it is about the relationship.

We are now going to think about how we could navigate potentially difficult conversations with our peers."



Taking action



SLIDE 22

Scenario 1: You are worried about a peer who is no longer sitting with you and others at lunchtime.



Scenario 2: Over the last week, a peer keeps making jokes about your new hair style.

Scenario 3: During break time, you heard a peer say a racist comment to another pupil in school.



Scenario 4: A peer shared with you that they were feeling upset because their caregivers keep arguing at home. They asked you not to say anything to anyone.



Do:

Present Slide 22.

Divide the pupils into small groups, hand out the resources, and allocate each group with scenario listed on the slide.



Do:

Ask pupils to prepare top tips of how to approach the conversation. This could include:

- Where to hold the conversation.
- Examples of how to start the conversation or respond to what has been shared.
- How to actively engage with the conversation. For example, removing any distractions such as phones.
- Any actions you may want to take following the conversation, such as speaking to a trusted adult.

Time to discuss: 10 minutes.

Continued...



Taking action (continued)



Do:

Ask each group to read out their scenario and present their top tips to the class.

Time to share: 5 minutes.



Say:

"It is important to actively practise skills to develop our communication skills with our peers. Some conversations with our peers can be challenging, but a healthy relationship is one built through kindness, mutual respect, trust, honesty, and open communication."



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Challenging thinking 25 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 23-26

Slide 23

Challenging thinking

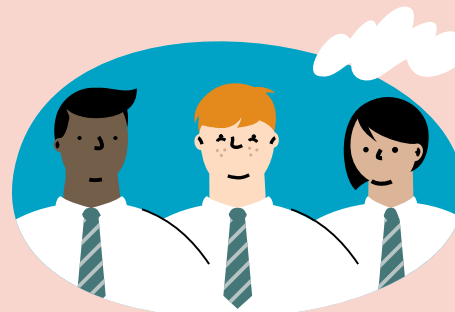


SLIDE 23



Our peers play an important role in how we experience a sense of belonging.

Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness.



Present Slide 23.



"Our peers are people that are similar in age to us and involved in the same activities or spaces. For example, as a class you are all peers as you are taking part in this lesson together.

Our peers play an important role in how we experience our sense of belonging in school. Having healthy peer relationships can support our wellbeing and mental health and protect us from experiences of loneliness."



Challenging thinking (continued)

Slide 24

Challenging thinking



SLIDE 24

What do healthy relationships with our peers look like and what can we do to maintain those relationships?



What are some common challenges facing pupils in building and maintaining healthy relationships with their peers?



What are the mental health benefits of healthy peer relationships?



Do:

Present Slide 24.



Ask:

Ask pupils to discuss in small groups:

- “What do healthy relationships with our peers look like and what can we do to maintain those relationships?”
- “What are the mental health benefits of healthy peer relationships?”
- “What are some common challenges facing pupils in building and maintaining healthy relationships with their peers?”

Time to discuss: 10 minutes.



Challenging thinking (continued)

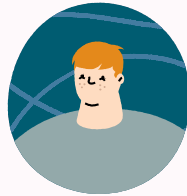
Slide 25

Challenging thinking



SLIDE 25

How we communicate is an important part of how we can build a healthy relationship.



Sometimes, following a conversation with a peer, we may experience our minds going over what was said, how we are feeling and how they might be feeling.



Do:

Present Slide 25.



Say:

"In our relationships with our peers, how we communicate is an important part of how we can build a healthy relationship.

One way we can have healthy relationships with our peers, is by having open and honest communication. Sometimes, sharing how we are feeling can be difficult, especially if it is about the relationship.

Sometimes, following a conversation with a peer, we may experience our minds going over what was said, how we are feeling and how they might be feeling.

Sometimes there are things we can do to ease our worries. Other times, the things we are worrying about are outside of our control."



Challenging thinking (continued)

Slide 26

Challenging thinking



SLIDE 26

Discuss in small groups:

- The concerns someone might have before, during and after having a difficult conversation with peer.
- Whether the concerns are within and outside of a person's control.
- The things a person could do to ease the concerns.



Do:

Present Slide 26.

Ask pupils to discuss in small groups:

- The concerns someone might have before, during and after having a difficult conversation with peer.
- Whether the concerns are within and outside of a person's control.
- The things a person could do to ease the concerns.

Time to complete: 10 minutes.



Do:

Invite pairs to share their ideas with the class.

Time to complete: 5 minutes.



Communication skills worksheet

Setting:

Conversation starters:

Body Language:

Conversation endings:



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Reflection worksheet

HEALTHY



RELATIONSHIPS



One thing I have learned:

One thing I would do differently:

One question I would like an answer to:



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