

Kit and Arlo Find a Way



Lesson 10 activity

Thumbs up or thumbs down

Learning intentions

Students will:

- learn that relationships and friendships need to be respectful if they are to be successful
- understand that everyone has their own definition of what respectful behaviour in relationships looks like
- know that there are some behaviours that are never acceptable in a relationship.

Time

30–40 minutes

Equipment

- 'Relationship Spectrum' written on the board
- Scenario list

Teaching notes

- This lesson is recommended for Grade 5 and 6 only.
- Prior to the lesson, watch the teacher videos on the *Kit and Arlo* website.
- Considerations for delivery of this sensitive content include:
 - classroom safety for everyone
 - setting the scene and group agreement
 - managing disclosures
 - ongoing support for students
- Students may think about some of the scenarios from the perspective of a different gender. The discussion may include ideas about where male and female stereotypes or stories come from. Using less inclusive binary (distinctly male and female) language is appropriate when we talk about patterns of behaviour, such as men controlling decision-making, adhering to rigid gender stereotypes, or as drivers of violence and disrespect, and in relation to men's violence against women. See the teacher support material for more on this.
- You can use relationship and friendship interchangeably here – especially for younger students.

Activity

1. Start the lesson by introducing the relationship (friendship) spectrum and describing it to students.

'The relationship spectrum is a spectrum that can describe the healthiness of a relationship or friendship. The spectrum applies to all relationships we have, including friendships, classmates, relatives and work.'

2. Write these 3 headings on the board:

Healthy ----- Unhealthy ----- Abusive

3. Explain:

'Different behaviours within a relationship can sit anywhere along the relationship spectrum. The behaviour within relationships can make a certain relationship move across the spectrum. For example, a relationship could go from healthy to unhealthy, or from unhealthy to abusive'

'These are some examples of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationship behaviours:

Healthy: making a shared decision to play a game 2 people both enjoy.

Unhealthy: making fun of another person.

Abusive: verbal abuse or physical violence, such as bullying.'

4. Watch the video 'What makes A relationship healthy?', at <https://youtu.be/UB9anEZx9LU>

5. Introduce the 'Thumbs up or thumbs down' activity:

'We're now going to think about and identify where certain behaviours sit on the relationship spectrum. In this activity, we'll do this by responding to different situations with a thumbs up, thumbs down or thumbs to the side.'

6. Write these definitions on the board:

Thumbs down: Not at all acceptable. Don't continue with the relationship and seek help.

Thumbs to the side: Not sure. Doesn't feel okay and you let the other person know. Keep a close watch on how things are going.

Thumbs up: Feels safe. You completely agree with what is going on in the relationship.

7. Read out the scenarios below to students. After each one, ask:

'Where do you think this behaviour belongs on the relationship spectrum? Look at the board to decide. Show your answer by putting your thumb up, down or to the side.'

Behaviour should be classified as either 'Healthy', 'Unhealthy' or 'Abusive.' (Suggested answers are in italics in brackets).

Relationship spectrum scenarios:

- Someone asks if they can share a hug with you. (*Healthy*)
- Someone takes the time to stop during your shared activity to ask if you are okay. (*Healthy*)

- Someone tells you that you are being ridiculous and won't listen to you when you are explaining to them something that is upsetting you. (*Unhealthy*)
- Someone makes you watch a scary movie when they know you don't like scary movies. (*Unhealthy or Abusive*)
- Someone grabs your sandwich out of your lunchbox without asking. (*Unhealthy or Abusive*)
- Someone yells at their partner for making too much noise, saying they are clanking dishes too loudly. (*Unhealthy or Abusive*)
- Someone tells you they don't want pizza for dinner, which is what you want. They instead want dumplings. (*Healthy*)
- Someone pokes your chest and pretends it was an accident, but you know it was on purpose. (*Abusive*)
- Someone texts you every 30 minutes to see where you are and what you are doing. (*Unhealthy*)
- Someone changes their mind about playing Lego with you. They now want to play with the dog. (*Healthy*)

There is room for discussion, especially if you ask the class what circumstances might change or affect a situation's position on the relationship spectrum. Is the behaviour repeated multiple times and continuous, or is it a once off? Does that change its place on the spectrum? Examples include texting to check on someone once a day compared to 10 times in a day, or grabbing someone else's lunch once compared to every day.

8. Discuss:

'Some people might classify different behaviour in different categories. We don't always have to agree on everything.'

'But there are some types of behaviour that are always 'thumbs down' – like physical violence, which is definitely at the 'abusive' end of the relationship spectrum.'

9. Finish the lesson by saying this to students:

'People should never have to feel pressured or forced into compromising. People should never pressure or force someone to agree with them.

That is not how people continue to have healthy, fun, positive and pleasurable relationships with others.

Everyone communicates in different ways. Humans can't read each other's minds, so we should always remember to ask questions and share how we feel.

Remember that it is always important to learn about and to build honest communication skills for fun and fulfilling relationships.'

Resources

love is respect (2020) *Relationship spectrum*, love is respect website.

<https://www.loveisrespect.org/everyone-deserves-a-healthy-relationship/relationship-spectrum/>

Sexual Health Victoria (2021) *Giving relationships the green light, Teaching activities, Grade 7 & 8*, Sexual Health Victoria website. <https://shvic.org.au/student-sessions/giving-relationships-the-green-light>

Resilience, rights and respectful relationships; Level 3–4 learning materials

- Topic 1 Emotional literacy: What do emotions look like? (p. 5)
Activity requires 'Emotions' cards and drawing materials
Time: 20+ minutes

Department of Education and Training (2018) *Level 3–4 Resilience, rights and respectful relationships*, State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), Fuse website.

<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/LandingPage?ObjectId=7327c6bf-696a-41c4-8fc3-3c45dccc8bd>

Resilience, rights and respectful relationships; Level 5–6 learning materials

- Topic 1 Emotional literacy: What do emotions look like? (p. 4)
Activity requires 'Room to move', and 'What am I feeling?' cards
Time: 20+ minutes
- Topic 2 Personal strengths: What are character strengths? (p. 16)
Activity requires 'Character strengths' handout
Time: 30+ minutes
- Topic 3 Positive coping: Introducing the concept of self-talk (p. 28)
Activity requires 'Positive self-talk' handout
Time: 15+ minutes

Department of Education and Training (2018) *Level 5–6 Resilience, rights and respectful relationships*, State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), Fuse website.

<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/LandingPage?ObjectId=b74ae78a-995a-4a73-8361-3a200d448bd7>