

LESSON #1: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MATERIALS

- Guidelines for Health Class poster or the materials (poster paper and markers) to create it
- Pieces of paper, marker, tape, for Activity #1
- If you choose to do Option #2 for Activity #2 – sound system and music required

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

It is important that students have an opportunity to understand what a healthy relationship is, and how it compares to a less healthy relationship. When they appreciate the differences, they will be able to engage in more healthy relationships.

TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS

- In Activity #2, Option #2, music is used.
- A SMART Board could be used to display each question in Activity #2. When taking up each question, invite a student from each pair to come up to the board and record a few of the ideas discussed with their partners.

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION TO UNIT 1 (3-5 MINUTES)

- If you want, you can provide students with an overview of what they will learn during this unit. Tell students they will learn about the importance of healthy relationships and how bullying and harassment impacts youth. In addition, they will look at the benefits and dangers of technology with respect to establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Opportunities to discuss stress and how to regulate their emotions will be presented. Students will also learn about decision-making and they will practise skills that assist them in making safe and healthy choices. Students will complete a culminating activity to showcase what they learned.
- Review the classroom expectations for the Healthy Living Unit – Personal Safety and Injury Prevention. You may choose to have some guidelines for health class posted in the room if similar expectations have not already been discussed with the class. It may be helpful to develop some of these guidelines together with the students.

Guidelines for Health Class:

- **Respect others** (i.e., Be mindful about what others are saying and thinking, actively listen to, and show respect for comments made by others.)
- **Use the No Name rule** (i.e., When providing an example, don't use names.)
- **Participate** (i.e., Try to participate actively in discussions.)

Some of the guidelines may include: respect others, participate in class activities, use the no name rule, etc. See the sample poster as an example. Create a poster for the classroom, and refer to it before beginning discussions, or when necessary as a reminder.

- Explain to students that over the next few days, as they study this unit, they will be doing three different things: they will have an opportunity to learn about healthy and unhealthy relationships; they will practise skills related to relationships with others; and they will focus on the benefits and concerns that arise from the use of media and technology.

ACTIVITY #1 – GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Strategy: Back-to-Back / Face-to-Face (10-15 minutes)

- Ask students to line up, without speaking to each other, from shortest to tallest along an imaginary continuum at the front of the room.
- Once students are in a line, fold the line in half, and pair them up (if done correctly, the shortest person should pair with the tallest person, etc., all the way down the line). Each pair should move to an open space in the classroom.
- Once all pairs have a place to stand in the classroom, ask them to turn so that they are back-to-back. They don't have to be touching, but their backs have to be toward each other and they need to be looking straight ahead.
- Ask students to do the following:
 - Change one thing about themselves (for example, change something about their clothing).
 - Then, say "face-to-face" and ask the pairs to turn to face each other. Each person has to guess what their partner has changed. Once they have had an opportunity to guess, ask them to turn "back-to-back" again.
 - This time, ask students to change two different things about themselves.
 - Once again, after they have had a chance to do this, say, "face-to-face" and ask them to guess what their partner has changed.
- Ask students to sit down, and then ask the following question:
 - When your partners changed their physical appearance by changing something about themselves, how did their personality change?
 - *In most cases, students will say that the personality did not change. They should be able to see that rolling up pants, buttoning up a shirt, removing an earring, messing up hair, etc., has nothing to do with the person's personality. Extend this idea to conclude that physical appearance is not a good indicator of someone's personality. Explain to students that they should not judge others based solely on physical appearances, even when these appearances are different from their own.*
- Ask what sorts of "**differences**" might be noticeable when looking at people. As each idea is offered, write it on a separate piece of paper. Once a number

of “differences” have been identified, give each student a piece of tape and one of the papers with a “difference” written on it.

- On the board, write the headings “**Personal Choice**” and “**Genetics.**” Explain that certain details of appearance have to do with taste and choices we make, while others are beyond our control. Then ask students to identify which of the “differences” written on the papers they hold are choices made by an individual, and which are based on genetics. One-by-one, they will come to the front and place the paper they hold under the appropriate heading, explaining their choice to the class.
- When everyone has placed a “difference” under a heading, remind the class that a few minutes ago, they said that changes in personal appearance did not indicate anything about the personality of the individual. Look at the list of examples under the “Personal Choice” heading, and suggest that these “differences” don’t really indicate personality or character of the individual.
- Suggest that this is even truer of details over which the individual has no control, like genetics. Point out that many of the things about a person that we notice first have to do with details over which an individual has no control, such as what family they are born into, how tall or short they are, what colour their skin is, where they were born, or their sexual orientation. It is unwise and unfair to make judgments about people based on details that do not indicate personality or character.
- Go on to explain that we need to accept and to respect differences in individuals. Most of us would like to be judged on our words and actions, rather than on our physical appearance. We can practise judging people by their words and actions if we develop the skill of “perspective taking”. Try to pay close attention to how a person is behaving, think carefully about how a person is feeling, consider why they are behaving the way they are, and guess what their motivation might be when they do or say something. Perspective taking is about being mindful of other people’s feelings and actions and about putting ourselves in other people’s “shoes” to try and understand them.
- Ask students to think about (but not say anything) what they can do to make sure that they are respectful of any difference that they observe in others. This may include people at school, people in the community, adults, young people, etc. After about 10 seconds to think to themselves, ask students to turn to the person beside them and share their ideas with this partner. Have the shorter partner speak first, and then the taller partner may speak to add to what they have thought. Then, ask some of the pairs to share their thoughts with the class. *Some possible responses might include: try not to judge people when you first meet them; avoid creating/relating people to stereotypes; give people a chance for you to get to know them; don’t engage in racist/sexist comments, etc.*
- Create a bridge to the next activity by explaining that we can develop good friendships with others when we mutually respect one another. Explain that it is important to understand the difference between the qualities of a good friend and the qualities of someone who is not a good friend.

ACTIVITY #2 – WHAT IS A GOOD/NOT SO GOOD FRIEND?

Strategy: Scramble OR Move to the Music (15-20 minutes)

NOTE TO TEACHER: There are two options for this activity: Scramble or Move to the Music

- Provide students with the following instructions before starting the activity.
 - Each time you say “Scramble”, students must find a new partner. An alternative is to have students “Move to the Music” and find a new partner each time you play music.
 - Once students have all found new partners, you will ask a question and they are to think to themselves about their response.
 - After students have had an opportunity to think for ten seconds, ask them to share their thoughts with their partner. Pairs will be asked to share their ideas with the entire class.
 - Once again, you will say “Scramble”, or start playing music, which means students have to find a new partner they haven't worked with yet today. This process will continue until all seven questions have been asked and debriefed.
- Below are a list of questions for the activity:
 1. What does a good friend look like? In other words, if you see someone being a good friend to someone else, what exactly do you see?
(Possible responses: smiling, encouragement, open body language, listening to other person without interrupting, positive comments on social media, etc.).
 2. What does a good friend sound like? In other words, what kinds of things might you hear when someone is being a good friend to someone else?
(Possible responses: encouraging/positive comments, laughter, kind tone of voice, etc.).
 3. What do you think it feels like to be friends with someone who is a good friend to you? What might it feel like if someone is not being a good friend to someone?
(Possible responses for a good friend: comfortable, safe, trusted, confident, happy, etc.). (Possible responses for someone not being a good friend: hurtful, upsetting, uncomfortable, frustrating, disrespected, insecure, etc.).
 4. What does it look like when you see someone who is not being a good friend to someone? In other words, what kinds of things do you see when someone is not being a good friend to someone else?

(Possible responses: mean looks, eye rolling, exclusion, negative comments on social media, crying, sadness, etc.).

5. What does it sound like when you see someone who is not being a good friend to someone? In other words, what kinds of things might you hear?
(Possible responses: angry voices, sarcasm, mocking statements, crying, etc.).
6. Explain to the students that many times when someone is not a good friend to someone else, it evolves into bullying because the negative behaviour that harms the other person is happening day after day. Often, students think that reporting their concerns to a teacher or other adult is “ratting”. However, you are actually being a good friend to someone in need of support if you do take a stand against hurtful behaviours and involve an adult for support. Identify some times when you think it would be important to report to an adult.
(Possible responses: if your friend has said/done something to harm someone else, if your friend is in some kind of danger, if your friend is bullying someone or being bullied by someone, etc.).
7. When would it be important to report to an adult instead of just handling something like bullying by yourself?
(Possible responses: There are some problems that are too difficult to deal with alone; you are telling about what has happened to keep your friend safe; your friend can't solve the problem alone; you disagree with the actions of your friend, etc.).

- **Summary:** Thank students for their participation in the activities. Ask students to pay attention to the friendships they see around them, including their own friendships. Encourage students to report valid concerns about bullying/harassment using the anonymous method of reporting at your school.

NOTE TO TEACHER: Barriers to reporting incidents will be discussed in Lesson 4

EXIT STATEMENT

Strategy: Exit Statement (2-3 minutes)

- Tell students that before they sit down, they each have to come up with one statement about what's important to them in a good friend. Explain that they will start their exit statement by saying, “*To me, a good friend is someone who...*” Allow students ten seconds to think to themselves, and then ask each person individually to state their “exit statement” before sitting down.

SUGGESTED EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Generate a group discussion about stereotypes. Start off by showing example images of personal choices that people make to change their appearance or identify with a particular style / group (e.g., punk, nerd, jock, prep, etc.). Then, show example images of appearances in terms of genetics (e.g., curly hair, brown eyes, skin colour, etc.). Talk with students about stereotypes and labelling.
- Have students write a Code of Conduct for their school (or review one they already have) to encourage non-discriminatory, anti-bullying behaviour. The code of conduct should make suggestions for how students could be respectful of differences they see in others, and what they should do if they see negative/harmful behaviour.
- Have students choose a particular stereotype or genetic example and create a photo journalistic project. Students will use images (e.g., photos, magazine pictures, drawings, etc.) to tell the story. Students could also choose to create a collage.
- Have students use the computer lab, their own devices, or a class set of tablets/chrome books to research information about the topics in this lesson.
- Have students watch one or both of the following videos:
 - TV2 | "All That We Share" <https://youtu.be/jD8tjhVO1Tc>
 - #TVDSBInclusive www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlrXBT92whA.
- Explain to students that when we label people and put them in different boxes, we don't see people for who they truly are. This video proves that we have a lot more in common than we think and we should keep that in mind when we encounter anyone who might seem different than we are. Have students identify things that they can do to make sure they are respectful of differences that they see in others.