

Module 1

Resilience Education

Student resilience and wellbeing are essential for both academic and social development. Children who are confident, resilient and emotionally intelligent perform better academically. These skills can contribute to the maintenance of healthy relationships and responsible lifestyles.

Module 1 includes a variety of activities to enhance students' personal and social capabilities and build their resilience through the context of drug education. The supporting student workbook is linked to the activities in this Teacher Resource and will offer opportunities for students to test their drug education knowledge and skills, solve problems using a drug education context, and reflect on their own attitudes and beliefs.

The suggested activities in this module of work can be modified or additional resources sourced to support student needs and the local context. It is recommended that videos be pre-viewed to determine suitability for different student cohorts.

TOPIC 1

Introduction to physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing

Activity 1 Am I the only one?



Learning intention

- Students define mental health
- Students discuss statistics related to young people's health, wellbeing and safety
- Students identify who young people can go to for advice and support

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Am I the only one?* – photocopy one set of cards per group

Die

Be Ready student workbook – *Healthy mind and body* – page 1-2

Internet access

Activities

1. Ask students to share what they understand by the term 'good mental health'. For example, good mental health can be described as a sense of wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem which enables us to fully enjoy and appreciate other people, day-to-day life and our environment.
2. Ask students to share what they understand about 'mental illnesses' and 'mental health problems'. For example, mental illness can be described as a health problem that significantly affects how a person thinks, behaves and interacts with other people. Mental illnesses are of different types and degrees of severity, and are diagnosed according to standardised criteria. A mental health problem also affects how a person thinks, feels and behaves, but to a lesser extent than a mental illness. One in five Australians will suffer from a mental illness in any given year.
3. Distribute a set of *Am I the only one?* cards to each group. Explain that each card has a statistic from a range of surveys and research studies related to young Australians' mental and physical health. Have students take turns reading the statement on a card to the rest of their group. Members are to discuss and guess the answer before the reader provides the correct answer. Groups should then share their opinions about the statistic or research finding.
4. To have groups report back on their discussion conduct a **head talk** (refer to page 110). Have the nominated students share some of the points discussed in their group. Use the following questions to process the activity.


Ask

- Were any of the statistics surprising? Why?
 - What other issues do you think are facing some young people in Australia?
 - Why would knowing statistics about alcohol and other drug use be useful for a young person? (Normative education is important when talking to young people about alcohol and drug use issues. Knowing that they are part of the majority who do not drink alcohol or use other drugs can empower a young person and give them the confidence to stand by their decision to abstain).
 - Why would knowing statistics about mental health be useful for some young people? (Talking about mental health may encourage a young person to seek help and support them in recognising that they aren't the only person dealing with mental health issues).
 - What can you do to promote your mental health? (eg abstain or minimise alcohol and other drug use, ask for help when needed, look after your physical health, acknowledge everyone is different and experiences things differently).
5. Conduct a survey of the class using the following statements and choice of answering – agree, disagree, unsure. Remind students of the no-name rule and that their responses will not be shared. Record the results and then compare to the statistics and research findings previously discussed.
 - Some students at this school are often worried about their study and homework.
 - Some students at this school have mental health problems.
 - Some students at this school are using alcohol or other drugs as a coping strategy.
 - Some students at this school are experiencing depression.
 - Some students at this school are over-concerned about their body.
 - Some students at this school are worried about being bullied or are being bullied.
 - Students at this school are likely to tell their teacher or another student if they are being bullied.
 - Students at this school feel comfortable talking to staff about their problems.
 - Students do not know how to get help for mental health issues like depression, anxiety or alcohol and other drug use.
 - Students at this school feel anxious about things.

Use the following questions to process the activity.

Ask

- *Do you think the staff at this school would benefit from knowing the results of this survey? Why?*
- *Do you think students at this school know what to do if another student tells them they are not coping or having suicidal thoughts?* (Tell the class the names of staff that are responsible for student health and welfare and how students can access these people. It is important that the class understand that they should tell an adult when a friend or peer expresses suicidal thoughts or intentions. They should not try to help the student on their own, even when the person has asked them to not tell anyone. The Youth Beyond Blue website has information on how a young person can get help for their own problem and how to give help to a friend).
- *What could our school do more to encourage students to share their problems?* (eg buddy systems, health programs, links to websites that offer advice and help. The school should also consider introducing students to the school psychologist or student services team throughout the year and where the offices of these staff members are located).

3.  Have students look at the Youth Beyond Blue website <http://www.youthbeyondblue.com/> which has ideas on how young people can face some of the issues discussed in this activity and seek help for themselves or others.
4. Explain that emotional health is just as important as physical health and that having a healthy mind and positive outlook can help students to get through some of life's ups and downs. Have the class share some of the ways they maintain their physical and mental health then answer the questions on *Healthy mind and body* on page 2 of their workbook.



Am I the only one?

More than 80% of children and adolescents in Australia have mental health problems? True or False

False. 14%

Discuss: How does it help schools to know this?

Source: (Glover, 1998)

Analgesics are the most commonly used drug (licit or illicit) among 12 to 17 year olds in Australia. True or False

True. 93.1% of 12-15 year olds have used analgesics in their lifetime. By 17 years, 94.2% have used analgesics.

Discuss: Why do you think young people use analgesics such as Panadol®? What other options do they have?

Source: (MHC, 2016)

One in four young Australians have experienced a mental health condition. True or False

True. 26.4% of Australians aged 16-24 have experienced a mental health disorder in the last 12 months. This includes young people with a substance use disorder. This is equivalent to 750,000 young people today.

Discuss: Should schools run mental health programs for secondary students?

Source: (Fildes et al., 2014)

Young people are most concerned about coping with stress, school or study problems, and body image. True or False

True. The top issues of concern to young people are coping with stress, school or study problems, body image, depression and family conflict (in that order).

Discuss: Do you think these issues are still of concern to young people?

Source: (Fildes et al., 2014)

A quarter of young Australians say they are unhappy with their lives. True or False

True. Almost one in four young people (24.3%) said they were sad, very sad or not happy when asked to report how happy they were with their life as a whole.

Discuss: Who do you think a young person could talk to if they were feeling sad and unhappy with their life?

Source: (Perrens et al., 2013)

Suicide is the biggest killer of young Australians and accounts for the deaths of more young people than car crashes. True or False

True. 324 young Australians aged 15-24 died by suicide in comparison to 198 who died in car crashes (second highest killer).

Discuss: Who could a young person, who was feeling suicidal, go to for help?

Discuss: Who could a young person, who was feeling suicidal, go to for help?

Source: (ABS, 2014)





Am I the only one?



Around four in five school students aged 12 to 17 years have never used cannabis in their lifetime. True or False

True. The 2014 ASSAD results state that 77.6% of students agree that smoking cannabis regularly is 'a little' or 'very dangerous'.

Discuss: If you were concerned about a friend who was using cannabis, who would you talk to?

Source: (MHC, 2016b)

The growing mental health issues among young people are not of concern to most young people. True or False

False. 15.2% identified mental health as a major issue facing Australia in 2013, up from 12.7% in 2012 and 10.7% in 2011.

Discuss: What can help if you're feeling anxious, depressed or alone?

Source: (Perrens et al., 2013)



Young people see mental health as a more important issue than things such as the environment, bullying, education and employment. True or False

True.

Discuss: Are your group's priorities the same as the young people surveyed?

Source: (Perrens et al., 2013)

One in six young Australians is currently experiencing an anxiety condition. True or False

True. 15.4% of Australians aged 16 to 24 have experienced an anxiety disorder in the last 12 months. This is equivalent to 440,000 young people today.

Discuss: What might enable a young person to seek help if they were feeling anxious?

Source: (ABS, 2008)



One in 16 young Australians is currently experiencing depression. True or False

True.

Discuss: If you thought your friend was depressed, what would you do to help them?

Source: (ABS, 2008)

Alcohol contributes to the three major causes of teen death: injury, homicide and suicide. True or False

True.

Discuss: Who could a young person talk to if they had problems with alcohol?

Source: (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2009)





Am I the only one?

Young males prefer to talk to their parents than teachers, counsellor and friends. *True or False*

True. *Young males often prefer to talk to their parents. Other sources of help include friends, parents, relative, family friend, internet, teacher, school counsellor, online counselling websites, magazines, community agency, and helplines.*

Discuss: *Where can young people get help in our community?*

Source: (Fildes et al., 2014)

Young people aged 15 to 19 years are more concerned about being bullied than coping with stress or body image? *True or False*

False. *Young people are concerned about bullying and emotional abuse but are just as concerned about coping with stress, school or study problems, body image, depression, family conflict, personal safety, suicide, discrimination and drugs.*

Discuss: *Which adults in this school might a student with one of these concerns ask for help?*

Source: (Fildes et al., 2014)

In a survey, almost 25% of young people felt that alcohol and other drugs were an issue facing Australia. *True or False*

True

Discuss: *Who might a young person talk to if they had an alcohol or other drug issue?*

Source: (Fildes et al., 2014)

What are the five main reasons why young males (aged 10 to 14 years) call the Kids helpline?

1. *Family relationships*
2. *Bullying*
3. *Emotional wellbeing*
4. *Child abuse*
5. *Friends/peer relationships*

Discuss: *If a student had any of these concerns, which adults in this school might they ask for help?*

Source: (Boys Town, 2013)

In a survey, 80% of Year 8 students believed they had no one to talk to in bad times. *True or False*

False. *25% believed they had no-one to talk to about their problems.*

Discuss: *What might this mean when someone needs help with a problem?*

Source: (Glover, 1998)

What are the five main reasons why young females (aged 10 to 14 years) call the Kids helpline?

1. *Mental health concerns*
2. *Family relationships*
3. *Emotional wellbeing*
4. *Suicide-related concerns*
5. *Dating and partner relationships*

Discuss: *If a student had any of these concerns, which adults in this school might they ask for help?*

Source: (Boys Town, 2013)

Activity 2 Building resilience



Learning intention

- Students define resilience
- Students identify personal and social skills that build resilience

Equipment

Be Ready student workbook – *Build your resilience* – page 3

Internet access

Family information sheet – *Raising resilient kids* – photocopy one per student

Activities

1. Explain that there are many situations in life where a person will need to be resilient and have the personal and social competence to cope with tough times while still maintaining their wellbeing and relationships with others. Give the class a **one minute challenge** (refer to page 111) to write a definition for the term 'resilient' in *Be Ready*. Listen to some of the students' responses.
2. Explain that resilient people:
 - know when and how to use skills such as optimistic and positive thinking, speaking assertively, solving problems, responsible decision-making, and planning ahead
 - know how to recognise their emotions and talk about their emotions
 - know how to manage their emotional responses to situations
 - can move forward with a plan of action rather than dwelling on one emotion such as fear or sadness as this can prevent them from coping with a situation
 - know their strengths and use these to deal positively with stressful and difficult situations, and to set short and long term goals.
3. Explain that being resilient does not mean 'problem free'. Resilient people have a range of skills that enable them to have an outlook on life that helps them to work through their issues and maintain relationships with others. Read *Build your resilience* on page 3 of *Be Ready* and discuss each of the points raised. Have students consider the tips and decide which of these they are already using (tick these) and those that they need to work on.

Ask

- *Why is it important for young people to build their skills of resilience?* (Having resiliency skills can minimise the effect of negative and stressful situations. It helps a young person to face challenges, learn from them and apply these skills towards living a healthy life).
 - *Think about your own resilience and some of the skills that you already use when you face a challenge or setback. How did you learn those skills?* (eg watching others such as parents, friends, teachers and role models. Tell students that everyone is capable of developing their resiliency skills however it takes effort and practice).
 - *Is it useful to 'pat yourself on the back' when you do something positive for your own health and wellbeing? Why?*
4. Ask students to complete the table filling it in with some ideas on how they can build their resilience.
 5. Send a copy of the Family information sheet – *Raising resilient kids* home with each student to share with their family.



Raising resilient kids

Student resilience and wellbeing are essential for both academic and social development. Children who are confident, resilient and emotionally intelligent perform better academically. The skills these children also possess can contribute to the maintenance of healthy relationships and responsible lifestyles.

Research has shown that children who are resilient are also less likely to be involved in problematic alcohol or other drug use, or misbehave in anti-social ways. Resilience and drug education is so important because it can help young people to learn the skills that will help them to manage their emotional responses and cope better with challenging situations that may come their way.

Resilience education gives young people the opportunity to develop a range of social and emotional skills that can influence the way they make choices and decisions in drug-related situations.

SDERA, 2011

Resilient kids know how to cope and bend or flex so they can manage life's ups and downs when they happen without letting them get them down, and without giving up.

Resilience is the fine art of being able to bungy jump through life. The pitfalls are still there but it is as if you have an elasticised rope around your middle that helps you to bounce back from hard times.

Andrew Fuller, 2011

Our class is building on the social and emotional skills that were covered in Year 7 and learning some new skills which include:

- **Seeking help for themselves and for others**

Help seeking is a fundamental skill for the health and wellbeing of young people. Knowing who to talk to when they have a problem can be difficult for some children, particularly when they are feeling stressed or confused. There can also be barriers that young people face when seeking help such as feeling afraid or embarrassed, thinking that others will judge them or won't understand, and that no-one will want to help them. Talk with your children and let them know that you will always be there to listen to their problems and can give advice on how to work through a situation if asked.

- **Recognising their own strengths and limitations**

Some children only see what they can't do not what they can do. Knowing their ability strengths (eg good at running or art) or character strengths (eg fair and honest) can help your children to take steps to overcome problems and set goals to increase their resilience. Tell your children the strengths that you see in them and why these are important. Give examples of how your children have used their strengths in the past.

- **Speaking assertively**

Being able to tell others how we are feeling and why, and what we would like to see happen can be helpful in establishing and maintaining relationships and in working through problems. Use any conflict situations at home as an opportunity for your children to practise this skill. Remember the result should be a 'win-win' for everyone.

- **Managing our emotions**

We know it can be hard to manage our emotions but the difference between adults and children is that we've learned how to work with these feelings appropriately. So ask yourself these questions. Have you practised good emotional management techniques yourself so your children can see what it looks like and how it works? Do you say things out loud such as *"I can manage this if I work on the parts of the problem that are my fault and stop worrying about the parts that aren't my fault and I can't change"*? Do you share how you feel with your children and explain why you're experiencing those feelings? Help your children get better at reading other people's emotions as this will help them to get along better with students and staff at school.

Try to model these resilience skills so your children can see from your example how they can help to maintain their health and wellbeing, and relationships with others.

TOPIC 2

Sources of help and health information

Activity 1 Seeking help



Learning intention

- Students consider help seeking options for themselves and others
- Students identify warning signs that they or someone close to them needs help

Equipment

A4 paper – several sheets per group

Folder (or envelope) – one per group

Paper clips – one per folder

Teaching tip

Duty of care and confidentiality will be discussed in this activity. Explain that when students share information that indicates they or others may be at risk (eg through use of alcohol or other drugs, self-harm, harm to others, domestic violence) teachers cannot ignore it and are obligated by their 'duty of care' to speak with the Principal and follow school procedures. Other health professionals such as doctors and counsellors are bound by confidentiality which means they cannot share a patient's conversations unless permission is given by the patient or they believe that the patient may harm themselves or others, or there is a court order.

Activities

1. Have the class **brainstorm** (refer to page 109) problems that adolescents may face such as conflict with friends and families, relationships with girlfriends or boyfriends, use of alcohol and other drugs, falling behind with school work or failing exams. Write each of the problems on a sheet of paper. Process this step using the following questions.

Ask

- Which of these problems do you think most young people face at some time?
- Which of these problems are only faced by some young people? Why?
- Which of these problems might require a young person to seek help and from whom? (For example, if a young person is using alcohol to cope with depression or anxiety, they might seek help first from a school staff member and then be referred to their doctor or a counsellor who works in the alcohol and other drugs field. A student having difficulty coping with their school work might talk to their year level coordinator or school counsellor. Remind students that in most situations their parent will be the best person to talk to first).
- What are some of the warning signs that would highlight that a friend is in need of help? (eg not sleeping or eating well, often quiet and not socialising with friends and family, angry, lack of care about dress and appearance, a sudden change in weight, increased 'accident prone' incidents, self-harming behaviours, giving away prized possessions, substance misuse, sudden and striking personality changes).

- If a friend was displaying some of these signs, do you think you have the right skills to help your friend? Why? (Remind the class of the no-name rule).

2. Explain that help seeking is a fundamental skill for the health and wellbeing of young people. However knowing who to go to and asking for help can be difficult for a young person, particularly when they are feeling distressed or confused. It is therefore important for students to identify those who can provide help and support when it is needed and also to develop the skills that will enable them to seek help from these sources.

Conduct a **send a problem** (refer to page 113) by attaching one problem to each folder. Give each group several sheets of paper and a folder. Explain that students are to write a list of the people or places a friend could use if they were faced with the problem and place their answers inside the folder. Groups then pass their folders onto the next group. Repeat the process until groups have their initial folder returned. Ask groups to read the ideas inside the folder and compile into one list.

Listen to the sources of help identified by groups and write these on the board. Use the following questions to process the activity.

Ask

- What did you notice about the people identified as those who a young person could go to for help? (Some sources will be useful for many problems such as a parent or friend whereas others may only be relevant or useful at certain times).
 - Why might it be easier to point a friend in the right direction when they need help than it is to decide who you should talk to when you have a problem? (eg sometimes being involved in the problem makes it difficult to see past that and make good decisions).
 - Why is it sometimes difficult for young people to get help? (Point out that often there are a number of barriers that young people face when seeking help such as feeling afraid or embarrassed, thinking that others will judge them or won't understand, or worried that no-one will want to listen and help them, no community services available where they live, haven't the skills to be able to find the right person).
 - Who can young people go to for help if they are having difficulty coping with stress at school? Problems at home? Bullying issue?
 - Who can young people go to for help if they are worried about their own or someone else's alcohol or other drug use? (eg call Kids Helpline, school counsellor, family doctor. Alert students to agencies in the local community).
 - When would you be doing the right thing telling an adult about a friend's problem? Why? (Ensure the class understand that adults may have more experience to help guide their friend to the right source of help. They should always speak to an adult if they think that their friend may harm themselves or others).
3. Suggest that students invite agencies in their local area to come to the school and explain to the student cohort the services that they offer, how they can be contacted and if there are any costs involved.

Activity 2 Talk to me



Learning intention

- Students consider sources of support
- Students practise making decisions

Equipment

Activity sheet *Talk to me* – photocopy and cut into cards
Be Ready student workbook – *A helping hand* – page 4-5

Teaching tip

Making the link is a curriculum-based program for schools to promote help seeking for cannabis use and mental health problems.



A free download is available at <https://positivechoices.org.au/teachers/effects-of-cannabis-on-the-teenage-brain>.

Activities

1. Explain to the class that it is best to have a range of sources to seek help and advice from, as some sources may not be useful for all problems. For example, students might want to talk to their teacher or school counsellor about being bullied whereas they may decide that a friend is better to talk to about a relationship problem with a girlfriend or boyfriend rather than their family.
2. Hand a *Talk to me* activity card to eight student volunteers. Read the following scenario about Craig to the class.

Scenario

- *Craig is 16 years and lives at home with his family. He has been drinking alcohol since Year 8. Craig loves drama but lately he has been missing rehearsals and has been turning up feeling tired and hung over which is making his drama teacher angry. His mates at school are worried about him. Craig wants to get help but doesn't know who to talk to about his drinking. Who would you suggest Craig talks to and why?*

Have each volunteer read the information on their card. Ask the students to choose who Craig should go to for help and stand behind this person. Invite students to explain the reasons for their choice and discuss as a group. Identify the card holders who do not have anyone standing with them. Ask the class to explain why these sources of help were not chosen.

3. Talk about the 'duty of care' that school staff are required to meet for students. Explain that students who share information with school staff that raises concern about the student's welfare or welfare of others must be passed onto the administration team in order to get the right help for each student.

4. Repeat the same process with the following scenario about Ellie.

Scenario

- *Ellie is in Year 8 and is a quiet, nervous girl who only has a few friends at school. She struggles with her schoolwork and often thinks that other students are saying mean things about her. Ellie has started smoking cannabis to help her relax and feel more confident to go to parties but she gets stoned and often does and says inappropriate things. You are worried about her as she has also started drinking. What would you do and who would you talk to?*

5. Explain that when we face a problem and want to make a decision there are certain things to consider such as how we are feeling, what choices we have and what might happen if we decide to use one of those choices. These are the steps we take to make a decision. Refer students to the decision-making model on page 4 of *Be Ready*.

Working in groups, have students complete the decision-making model using the scenario about Ellie. When completed, discuss if the model made it easier to identify what they would do as Ellie's friend. Ask students to identify at what step, seeking advice or help would be useful (ie Step 2 and 3).

6. Have students answer the questions in their workbook by investigating sources of health information such as websites, help lines, online resources, or agencies in the local community that can support young people who are going through a challenging time. Using the information, have students set up a display in an area of the school where other students can access the information.
7. Have students identify five sources of help they would feel confident to use for a range of problems and write these in their workbook on page 5.

Note: The author acknowledges this activity has been adapted from *Making the link* viewed 8 October 2015, www.ncpic.org.au.



Talk to me

<p>Doctor</p> <p>I am a trained professional who talks to patients about their physical and mental health issues. I will listen and suggest some ways you can work through your problem. I can also refer you to other sources of help such as a mental health counsellor. I am bound by confidentiality.</p>	<p>School counsellor</p> <p>Students will often come and talk with me as I'm a very good listener and have been trained to help young people work through their problems. I can also suggest a plan that you can use. I am bound by confidentiality.</p>
<p>Teacher</p> <p>I am a good listener and students will often come and talk to me and ask for advice. I can point you in the right direction so you can get help with your problem. I have a duty of care if you say something that I think will affect your health and safety, or the health and safety of others. I may need to pass on information to other staff who can help.</p>	<p>Mental health counsellor</p> <p>I am trained to listen and talk with young people about a range of things including their mental health, relationships and alcohol and other drug issues. I will talk with you to help you decide ways you can manage your issue. I am bound by confidentiality.</p>
<p>Sibling</p> <p>We've grown up together and we might not get along all the time but you're my brother/sister. I know talking to our parents isn't always easy to do so talk to me. If I don't know the answer I can suggest some ideas and go along with you when you do talk to our parents or someone else you trust.</p>	<p>School nurse</p> <p>Students often come to me for advice on medical problems but you can also come and talk to me when you have other things going on in your life that you might not know how to deal with alcohol and other drugs. I really want to help you. I have a duty of care so I may need to involve other people if I'm concerned that you might be harming yourself or someone else.</p>
<p>Friend</p> <p>I know you and am always there for you. I might not know all the answers but I am a good listener and might have some suggestions to help you sort out your problem. If you tell me you are going to hurt yourself or someone else or I think you might do this, I will need to let an adult know even if you have asked me not to because I care about you.</p>	<p>Parent</p> <p>I know you probably think I won't understand and you find it hard to tell me things, but I love you and will always be there to help and support you. I might not know all the answers but I can find other people who can help us work through your problems. You just need to trust me.</p>

Activity 3 Communication techniques



Learning intention

- Students identify communication techniques to persuade someone to seek help
- Students identify a range of options and their related consequences before making a decision

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Suggest a strategy* – photocopy one card per group

Be Ready student workbook – *A helping hand* – page 4

Be Ready student workbook – *Look after your mates* – page 10

Family information sheet – *Helping your teenager ask for help* – photocopy one per student

Teaching tip

Decide if you would like everyone in the class to perform a **role-play** (refer to page 112) just have a group of student volunteers in front of the class. Sometimes students may create parodies in their role-plays. Let the joke be enjoyed by the class then refocus the students by asking them to perform the situation again showing a more realistic version focusing on the difficulties that may be faced.

Activities

1. Explain that having a conversation with someone you are worried about can be difficult but there are some effective communication techniques that can help you to do this. For example, start the conversation with a simple question 'Are you okay? I'm worried about you.' This immediately tells the other person of your concern about their health or safety and invites a response.

Have students **brainstorm** (refer to page 109) what they should do when they talk to a friend who they are concerned about. If students do not identify the following ideas, include them in the discussion.

- Listen well and use body language that tells your friend you are listening and you are concerned about them.
- Show them you understand them.
- Don't dismiss their feelings and say things like 'You'll be okay' or 'It's not that bad.'
- Tell them that you care – 'I'm concerned about you and I don't like seeing you so unhappy.'
- Tell your friend that you are there for them – make sure you are prepared to follow through on this.
- Talk with your friend about finding an adult that can help.
- Tell your friend that they can call you at any time of the day if they need to.
- Tell your friend that you are worried about them – 'Some of the things you've done lately aren't like you and they have made feel really scared.'
- Ask what your friend wants you to do – how you can help.
- Keep the conversation confidential (unless there is a fear that the friend will hurt themselves or others).

Remind the class that if they feel their friend's problem is beyond their level of support and they are concerned about their friend's welfare, it is important for them to seek help and advice as their own welfare may be jeopardised.

2. Place students in groups of two or three, depending on the size of the class. Distribute a card from *Suggest a strategy* to each group. Have each group use the decision-making steps on *A helping hand* page 4 of the workbook to identify the options and decide what the friend should do. Students are then to create a **role-play** (refer to page 112) using some of the brainstorm ideas and dialogue to show how help could be given to the friend.
3. Watch each role-play and discuss if the performers:
 - used verbal and non-verbal communication effectively
 - suggested sources of help that were relevant to the situation.
4. Read and discuss *Look after your mates* on page 10 of the workbook. Have students complete the questions and create a cartoon to illustrate a friend helping a friend.



Suggest a strategy



A friend has been saying and doing some weird things lately. You are worried that they might hurt themselves.

What can you do to help your friend?

A friend always wants to get drunk at parties and has recently started smoking cannabis. Your friend tells you that it helps them to forget about the things going wrong in their life.

What can you do to help your friend?



Your friend has started being rude to other people and gets angry very quickly. You like your friend but you don't like the way he is behaving. You are worried that there is something going on in your friend's life that is making him act this way.

What can you do to help your friend?

A friend sends you a text message telling you about some bad stuff they have done and they don't know what to do. Your friend asks you not to tell anyone but you are worried.

What can you do to help your friend?



Your friend has been sneaking drinks of alcohol at home for quite a while but lately he has been bringing some to school in his drink container. Sometimes he wags class and goes to the park to drink.

What can you do to help your friend?

A friend has been buying prescription drugs from another student at school. Your friend says the drugs help her to calm down and you are concerned there is something going on that is causing your friend to feel anxious.

What can you do to help your friend?



Your friend has started doing some crazy things like playing chicken with oncoming cars, drinking a lot of alcohol, going off with boys she doesn't know, and hooning around in a friend's car.

What can you do to help your friend?

A friend had unprotected sex while she was drunk. She is worried about being pregnant or catching an STD but asks you not to tell anyone.

What can you do to help your friend?





Helping your teenager ask for help

Many teenagers believe that they should be able to sort out their problems on their own. They are often too embarrassed to talk to someone and can also be worried about the confidentiality of information that they may give to a professional.

So what can you do as a parent? Keep talking to your children and let them know that no matter what the problem is you will listen, without judgement or criticism, and help them to work out ways to cope or solve the problem.



- **Listen.**
- **Make sure you know your children's friends and their parents.**
- **Listen non-judgementally.**
- **Tell them you are concerned about them.**
- **Ask if they have thought about getting help. If your child has resisted getting help, ask them why.**
- **Check to see if your teenager is okay with you letting the school know there is a problem.**
- **Offer to make an appointment for your child to talk to a professional and attend with them if this is what they want.**



Where else can you go for advice?

- **Alcohol and Drug Support Line**

Phone: (08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers only)

E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

For anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or drug use..



<https://au.reachout.com/>

Reachout is about helping young people to help themselves

<https://www.youthbeyondblue.com>

Beyondblue is a national depression initiative for young people

www.kidshelp.com.au

Kids Helpline is a 24 hour help line that can be called on 1800 55 1800

www.headspace.org.au

Headspace and Yarn Space

TOPIC 3

Managing relationships

Activity 1 It's what you say and how you say it



Learning intention

- Students analyse enablers of and barriers to effective verbal and non-verbal communication
- Students recognise that people's emotions can be interpreted through their non-verbal messages
- Students analyse and practise assertive communication in a range of situations

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Non-verbal messages* – photocopy one sheet per pair of students, cut in half

A3 paper – one sheet per group

Be Ready student workbook – *It's what you say and how you say it* – pages 6-7

Family information sheet – *Speaking assertively* – photocopy one per student

Activities

1. Place students in pairs. Give a student in each pair either the A or B section of the activity sheet *Non-verbal messages*. Explain that students are to take turns giving their partner each of the messages without using any spoken or written words within a 60 second timeframe. Have students keep track of the messages that their partner interpreted correctly. Use the following questions to process the activity.

Ask

- Was it difficult or easy to convey your 'silent' message? Why?
- What did you do to help convey your message? (eg used hand or body gestures, mimed out the situation, nodded or smiled when the message was being understood).
- What cues helped you the most to understand the message your partner was giving? (eg body posture, hand movements, facial expressions, nodding your head).
- Are non-verbal cues an important part of how we communicate with others? (Yes. They can help you to interpret another person's emotions).
- What non-verbal cues tell you that a person is interested in what you have to say? Show your partner (eg looking at you, nodding your head, raising eyebrows).
- What non-verbal cues tell you that a person is worried, angry, confused, or needing help? Show your partner some of these (eg frowning, facial expression, shoulders hunched).
- Do we rely on verbal or non-verbal cues the most?

- In some cultures, non-verbal communication is frequently used such as in dances or ceremonies. Does your family or culture use non-verbal communication in some way and if so, how? (These are some examples. Rubbing noses is a way to greet others in Maori culture. In the Middle East, nodding the head down indicates agreement, while nodding it up is a sign of disagreement. In Japan, an up-and-down nod is a signal that someone is listening. The thumbs-up signal is vulgar in Iran. The okay signal made by forming a circle with the thumb and forefinger refers to money in some countries, while in others it's an extremely offensive reference to a private body part. Pointing with anything less than your entire hand is offensive in Indonesia. Some cultures value eye contact as a sign of respect, while averting your eyes may be the sign of respect in others. Some countries consider a handshake rude, and it's always rude to hand an object to another person with your left hand in the Middle East. Burping after a meal is considered the height of uncouthness in many cultures however a hearty belch is a sign of appreciation for the cook in India. In some places, people value a certain degree of personal space in conversation, while those from the Middle East might stand very close to each other when they want to converse. In Asia there is a belief that patting a child on the head will damage the child's soul).

- Can you tell how someone is feeling if they send you a text message? (It can be difficult unless they verbalise the emotion in the message eg 'I'm really angry with her'. Have the class identify the social media sites they use eg Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine, What's App, Line. Briefly discuss why messages and posts on these sites can be misinterpreted by readers).

2. Explain to students that non-verbal communication can complement verbal communication styles as it is not just what we say but how we say it. For example, if someone was to communicate their viewpoint aggressively it may look like a frowning face, high volume voice, hands on hips, finger pointing, using statements such as "You are an idiot! No way are we going to do that! I can't believe you're so stupid!" Whereas a person standing with head bowed, slumped shoulders, turned slightly away and saying, "I'll just do what you want to do. What I think doesn't really matter" is using a passive communication style. A person communicating assertively will stand facing the person and look confident while saying, "I understand what you want but it is not what I want. Let's try and work this out."

In groups, have students write the following headings on their paper: definition, looks like, sounds like, feels like, non-verbal cues, verbal cues, outcome, and then **graffiti** (refer to page 110) responses for each heading to describe assertive communication. Listen to some of the groups' responses.

3. Read the information about speaking assertively on *It's what you say and how you say it* page 6 of the workbook. Crosscheck the information with the ideas generated on the graffiti sheets. Use the following questions to process the activity.

Ask

- *Would you be able to speak assertively to try and stop your friends from pressuring you to do something that could potentially be unsafe?*
 - *Is it easier to say something, do something or just walk away in situations where others are trying to influence or pressure you? Why?*
 - *Why might alcohol or other drugs make it harder for you to handle a situation? (eg the person who has used the alcohol or drugs may be affected in some way that they are unable to make reasonable choices and decisions, or they become aggressive).*
 - *How comfortable do you feel to speak assertively to someone who is older than you? A family member? A relative? (Explain that skills that can be used in tricky or difficult situations aren't ones that we use that often, so it's important that students practise speaking assertively to become more confident and competent).*
4. Have students read the information about negotiation and managing conflict in their workbook. Explain that these are other skills that can be used along with speaking assertively to manage a range of situations.
 5. Have groups work through either the Simon, Nat or Taj scenario on page 7 of *Be Ready* and decide how the character could deal with the situation assertively and achieve the preferred outcome of a 'win-win' for both parties. Students should write their ideas in their workbook. Listen to responses for each of the scenarios.
 6. Explain that groups are to create a **role-play** (refer to page 112) for the scenario they discussed and that everyone in the group is to play the role of the main character. When groups have practised, select one group to perform their role-play. Have the class decide if the main character managed the situation using assertive communication and if a win-win outcome was achieved.
 7. On page 7 of their workbook, have each student write their own statement defining assertive communication and several statements they would use when placed in a difficult situation. Suggest students use 'I' statements, describe their feelings and give valid reasons for wanting the situation to change. For example: *"I know you want to have fun but I'm worried. I don't want you to end up paralysed and have to come and watch us play basketball from the stands."*
 8. Send a copy of the Family information sheet – *Speaking assertively* home with each student to share with their family.



Non-verbal messages

Place students in pairs. Give each student one half of the activity sheet. Students take turns to 'tell' their partner each statement without using words.

**A**

1. You are very worried that you might be a ghost.

2. You think your partner is looking really great in their new jeans.

3. You were knocked on the head and can't remember your way home.

4. Your house is on fire.

5. You are a big fan of a movie star who has just driven by in their limousine.

6. You are late getting to the last game of the season.

7. You have missed the last bus home.

8. The other person is standing right in the path of a semi-trailer.

How many did your partner guess correctly?

B

1. You spotted a venomous snake hiding in the classroom.

2. You need some money to buy a present for your mum's birthday.

3. You love to eat Japanese food with chopsticks.

4. You're in a hurry to get to an important school exam.

5. You don't like the weeds that are growing in your garden.

6. You want your friend to come in fancy dress to your birthday party.

7. You can't find your phone.

8. You hate eating spaghetti.

How many did your partner guess correctly?





Speaking assertively

The way we communicate can make a difference. When your children are faced with a difficult situation involving others, what do they do? Start demanding their own way, raise their voice, look scared, drop their head or storm off and refuse to talk? Being able to communicate effectively is a skill that your children need to learn.

If your child doesn't express their thoughts or feelings or ask for what they want, always put their needs last, and say things like – *It's okay I'm happy to go along with what you want* – they are communicating passively. So they will often experience an outcome where they lose and the other person wins.

On the other hand if your child always puts their needs first, makes demands, thinks it's someone else's fault and blames them, looks angry and stands with their hands on their hips and does a lot of pointing, talks loudly at the other person and says things like – *You idiot. That's not going to happen* – they are using an aggressive communication style. Your child is aiming for an outcome of 'I win, you lose' which will often cause problems with others and compromise a relationship.

In class we are learning about speaking assertively. This is when a person tries to look at the problem from both sides. They state very clearly what they think, how they feel and what they want but they don't demand. Speaking assertively is when we say things like – I understand what you're saying but that's not how I feel. Let's try and work this out. The person is trying to achieve a win for everyone involved.

It's not only what we say but also how we say it that is important.

You can help your children to practise speaking assertively so that they become more competent and confident to handle difficult situations in a way that still allows them to meet their needs and maintain their relationships with others.

- Tell the other person what you are thinking, how you are feeling and what you really want.
- Stay strong and stand by what you think is right.
- Feel confident to say 'no' – don't feel guilty or worried.
- Understand that the other person also has a right to say 'no'.
- Use a calm voice and deliver your message in a non-threatening way.
- Stand up straight and look at the other person – don't stare. Try not to frown, point, or fold your arms in front of your chest.
- Tell them what you have noticed. *When I was at the party last week you kept trying to make me drink alcohol.*
- Tell them what you thought or how you interpreted what happened. *I thought it was rude and others kept looking at me.*
- Tell them how you are feeling about the situation. *I felt embarrassed and a bit angry.*
- Tell them what you would like to happen. *Next time we're at a party, let me decide what I want to do and don't try to pressure me.*

Activity 2 Strategies for managing emotional responses



Learning intention

- Students identify a range of emotions
- Students practise using positive self-talk
- Students understand that experiencing an emotion over a long period of time has health and relationship consequences

Equipment

A3 paper – one sheet per group

Be Ready student workbook – *Managing your emotions* – pages 8-9

Post-it notes or small squares of paper – three per student

Internet access

Family information sheet – *Healthy ways to manage your emotions* – photocopy one per student

Teaching tip



Smiling Mind is a modern meditation program for young people. It can be viewed at <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app>

Students can use the trial session to find out about deep breathing and how mindfulness can calm their mind and body and is a useful way to manage negative emotions and stressful situations.

Activities

1. Working in groups and with an A3 sheet of paper, have students create a list of emotions using a **graffiti strategy** (refer to page 110) in a five minute timeframe. Remind students that everyone should contribute to the brainstorm and that all responses should be accepted.

Ask one group to read out the emotions listed on their ABC sheet. Other groups can contribute other answers not already put forward. Explain that being able to recognise the emotions you and other people might experience is a key skill for getting along with others and maintaining positive relationships. Explain that all emotions and feelings are valid and should be acknowledged, however there are some emotions that can be considered negative or unhelpful, especially if they are felt regularly and over a long period of time. Have groups circle the emotions that are listed on their graffiti sheet and in this category.

2. To consider how feeling emotions such as anger, fear, shame and envy, for long periods of time, can affect a person's body and mind and relationships, have each group discuss one of the helpful emotions circled on their graffiti. The following questions can be written on the board to guide the groups' discussion or asked one at a time.

Ask

- *What might some of the consequences be if you felt this way for a long time?* (eg disengagement from family and friends, depression, feeling of hopelessness).

- *How might it change things in your life?* (eg affect relationships, struggle with school work, affect sleeping and eating habits).
- *Why is it important to moderate and regulate these emotions?* (Point out that these emotions are perfectly normal and everyone has them at some time in their life. However, if negative emotions control a person and become a person's 'default' way of feeling (eg always aggressive, moaning or complaining), it can make them unpleasant to be around and over time can also be damaging to their body and mind. When people get stuck in a negative head space with difficult feelings, they may lean on drugs or alcohol and have a negative impact on relationships with people who care about them).
- *Would having positive emotions all the time also be damaging?* (Yes, if the positive outlook was a pretence that was being used to mask a problem and that problem was not being dealt with).
- *Who might a young person go to for help if they were struggling with unhelpful emotions?* (eg school counsellor, chaplain, teacher, parent, friend, helpline).

3. Ask students to define the term 'self-talk'. Listen to a few answers. Explain that self-talk is what we say to ourselves in our head, although sometimes it may be said out loud. Self-talk is often divided into positive, negative and technical (ie when we tell ourselves how to do things while we are doing them).

Use the example of Joe on page 8 of *Be Ready* to explain how a person's behaviour can be influenced by the emotions they feel and the type of self-talk they use when faced with a situation or event.

Situation		
Joe walks in on his friends playing his favourite computer game when he wasn't invited.		
Emotion	Self-talk	Behaviour
Joe feels angry	<p>"No-one likes me."</p> <p>"I thought they were my mates."</p> <p>"They know I always beat them so they didn't invite me."</p>	<p>Joe says, "I don't want to play your stupid game and you can all forget about coming to my place on the weekend!"</p> <p>Joe storms out of the room and his friends keep on playing.</p>
Joe feels a bit disappointed	<p>"That's okay. I wonder if I missed their text?"</p>	<p>Joe says, "I love this game. Why didn't you invite me? His friend says, "I sent you a text – check your phone."</p> <p>Joe smiles and gets ready to play.</p>

Highlight that even when a person is experiencing an emotion such as anger, if they use 'up thinking' or positive self-talk, their behaviour will reflect this way of thinking. For example if Joe felt angry or disappointed but used positive self-talk such as *'That's okay. I wonder if I missed their text?'* he will most likely join in the game with his friends.

Have students complete the Tom and Miranda examples on page 8 of *Be Ready* and then discuss their answers with a partner.

4. Explain that managing emotions is different to trying not to have any emotional responses, and that all emotions have a purpose. For example, an emotion such as anger can prompt a person to stand up for themselves and say or do what they think is right, and deal with any of the wrong things that might have happened. Give each student three post-it notes and have them write one useful strategy for managing uncomfortable emotions on each. Use a **card cluster** (refer to page 109) to sort and discuss the students' ideas using these headings:
 - Calm down what's happening in your body
 - Use helpful and positive thinking (eg this is a challenge not a problem)
 - Tell others how you are feeling and why
 - Seek to solve the problem
 - Other.

Ask

- *Is each strategy useful in all situations where you experience a negative emotion? Why?* (There are some coping strategies that will always be useful in stressful situations such as breathing deeply, looking at the situation using positive or helpful thoughts, trying to understand the situation or clarifying it, and trying to work out which parts of the situation are your responsibility and under your control and which aren't. Choose one or two negative emotions and test them against the strategies).
5. Have students reflect on the way they manage their emotions and use self-talk by completing the questions on page 9 of *Be Ready* and keeping a 'feelings diary' for a week.
 6. Send home a copy of the Family information sheet – *Healthy ways to manage your emotions* with students.



Healthy ways to manage your emotions

Managing our emotions in a healthy way is not always easy. Teenagers are learning to do this as they navigate through life. Having positive role models who show them how to manage their emotions in a positive way is very important for their development.

So, ask yourself these questions. Have you practised good emotional management techniques yourself so your children can see what it looks like and how it works? When talking with your children, do you use 'I' statements, such as:

- I can manage this if I work on the parts that are my fault.
- It's okay that I feel this way and I know that I can work through this situation.

In relevant situations, do you share how you feel with your children and explain why you're experiencing these emotions?

It's important for parents to model and teach their children successful ways to manage their emotions so they will feel better and be more likely to make responsible decisions within their relationships with others.

To help them gain self-awareness, say things like – *I've noticed that you get angry whenever you think something isn't fair. Are you aware of that? Or, I often see you get angry when someone disagrees with you and you feel like you aren't being respected. Do you agree with that?* Choose a time when your child is calm to have these critical conversations.

Believe that your children can take care of their emotions on their own. Give them time to process their emotions on their own. Acknowledge their feelings and give them a chance to talk things through but don't try to 'fix' things. Saying things that over-empathise a situation, such as – *Oh no, that's shocking, you must be devastated, you poor thing* – can give your child a message that it's a bigger problem than they thought.

Let your children know that their emotions are valid even if you think they are overreacting.

Adolescents don't always see the real picture and they might draw conclusions that to you seem ridiculous. For example a 15 year old girl who has just been dropped for the first time may say – *"No-one else will ever want to go out with me."* Or *"I'm the only girl at school who doesn't have a boyfriend."* Tempting as it may be to say – *"You're being absolutely silly!"* it's important to avoid saying things that minimise children's feelings.



Tips for your children

1. Breathe and relax.
2. Use positive, realistic thoughts (self-talk).
3. Talk to someone and tell them how you are feeling and why.
4. Exercise or do something else that you love doing to take your mind off the situation for a while, but then you need to go back and tackle it.
5. Look at the problem as a challenge that you can work at and learn from.
6. Decide which bit of the problem you were responsible for and which parts were out of your control.
7. Ask for help if you need it.

Activity 3 Making responsible decisions



Learning intention

- Students practise making decisions

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Snap decision cards* – photocopy one card per student

Activities

1. Explain that sometimes we may need to make a quick decision in a situation where our health and safety, or the health and safety of others, is at risk. These decisions may also need us to decide how to stand up for what we believe while trying not to damage a relationship with someone who is important to us. For example, when your best friend shouts at you – *Come on there's our bus, race you across the road!*
2. Explain that the class are going to practise making snap decisions. Divide the class into groups of five. Distribute one snap decision card to each group. Explain that groups are to **brainstorm** (refer to page 109) some comments that might encourage the person described in their scenario to make an unsafe or safe decision.

To play out the scenarios, assign one of the roles below to each member of a group.

- **Person 1:** Sits in a chair and listens to the comments then makes the final decision based only on what Person 2 and 3 have said.
- **Person 2:** Is responsible for giving comments to encourage Person 1 to take the risky option and stands to the right of Person 1.
- **Person 3:** Is responsible for giving comments to encourage Person 1 to not take the risky option and stands to the left of Person 1.
- **Person 4:** Is responsible for reading the scenario to the rest of the class and reminding Person 1 which skills they could use in this scenario before they make their final decision.
- **Person 5:** Pauses the activity and asks questions of the audience, such as: *Which comments do you think are the most convincing at this point? What do you think Person 1's decision would be if these were his/her thoughts?*

When all groups have played out their scenarios ask the following questions.

Ask

- Did Person 1 always choose Person 2? Why?
 - How did you feel when Person 2 and 3 were throwing comments at you and forcing you to make a snap decision?
 - Would the decision made affect one of these friendships?
 - Were there any scenarios where friendship was more important than health or safety? Why?
 - Were there any scenarios where being given reliable information about alcohol or other drugs, would have helped you to make your decision?
 - What could the person in your scenario have done to reduce or avoid the possible harms?
3. In the same groups of five, assign three students to role-play the scenario from their card and demonstrate a way to reduce the potential harms. The remaining two students are to be the main character's 'brains' in a **hidden thoughts role-play** (refer to page 111). The 'brains' stand behind their character and when asked by the teacher, are to reveal the hidden thoughts and feelings that may not have been expressed by the character. Allow only a very brief rehearsal time as it is the process rather than the performance that is important in this activity.

Have students perform their role-play. Stop the role-play several times at pertinent spots to interview 'the brains' using these questions to elicit deeper thinking.

Ask

- What is this character afraid of?
- What is this character hoping will happen?
- What is stopping your character from doing what he knows is right or necessary?
- What would help your character get on and do this?
- What would it take for your character to get help for/stand up to the other person in this scenario?

Students who have observed the role-play or played other characters can make additional suggestions to a particular character about alternative harm reduction strategies following the hidden thoughts role-play.



Snap decision cards

A friend who you had arranged to walk home with has accepted a lift from someone who you know has been drinking. Your friend wants you to get in the car?

What will you do?

You're with a group of friends at the bus stop. The bus is late and everyone is getting bored. One of your friends suggests you all smoke a joint for fun. You don't want to be the only one who says no.

What will you do?

You're at a football windup for the under 17 team. There are lots of adults who are drinking and some of the older boys are also drinking. You're only 15 and know that your parents will ground you if you even have a sip of alcohol but you don't want the other guys to make fun of you.

What will you do?

A friend has invited you over to their place for dinner but you've heard his parents often smoke cannabis. You're worried about what your parents might do if they find out but you don't want to offend your friend.

What will you do?

You have been invited to a 14th birthday party and know that no adults will be there. You think that your parents won't let you go if they know it's not a supervised party but you really want to go.

What will you do?

You're at a school camp. One of the camp rules is that if anyone is found using alcohol or drugs their parents will be informed and you will be sent home. One night your friend takes out what he says are tranquillisers. He says, "They're from a doctor so they must be okay to try."

What will you do?

You are worried about your friend's smoking. She seems to smoke every day and spends lots of money on cigarettes. You think you should talk to her about this problem but you're worried about offending her.

What will you do?

A 16 year old boy has been drinking heavily at a party and has fallen down the stairs, knocked his head and is bleeding quite badly. His mates want to put him to bed and let him 'sleep it off' but you think he needs medical help.

What will you do?

Your friends ask you to put \$10 towards buying a bottle of Vodka for the party tomorrow night. They say they won't have enough money if you don't put in. You don't want to drink or spend your money in this way but you don't want to offend your friends.

What will you do?

TOPIC 4

Strengths

Activity 1 Identifying strengths and qualities in yourself and others



Learning intention

- Students identify a range of strengths and qualities
- Students work collaboratively to achieve a group goal

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Who am I?* – photocopy one card per student

Pins or safety pins or sticky tape – one per student

Teaching tip

Students can make their own famous people cards.

Activities

1. Pin one *Who am I?* card on the back of each student, without disclosing the name of the person shown on the card.
2. Explain that the aim of the game is for each student to find out the name of the famous person shown on their card. To do this they must ask another student in the class a question. If the answer is 'yes' they can ask another question. If the answer is 'no' they must move on and find another student and repeat the process. Encourage students to ask questions such as '*How am I like* (other student's name in the class)?' or '*How is this person like me?*' The student must think of a strength or quality that the famous person and the student have in common. The game continues until all students have guessed the famous person's name. Process the activity using the following questions.

Ask

- *Was it easy to name the strengths or qualities of other students in the class? Why?* (Explain that we all have strengths and qualities that make up our character and personality. These can be grouped into ability strengths (eg being a good runner or artist) or character strengths (eg being honest and fair).
- *How did you feel when someone in the class told you about a strength or quality that you possess?*
- *Is it important we know the strengths and qualities that we possess? Why?*
- *Is it important to recognise the strengths and qualities of other people? Why?* (eg you may want to draw on those people to help you in areas that you do not have as strengths, relationships are stronger when you show gratitude or give positive comments, identifying the skills of a group can help to get a task done or achieve a goal together).

3. Place students in groups of three or four. Explain that students are to create a 'pitch' for an advertising company who are looking to hire a group of students to help them develop a new television show for teenagers. The pitch can be in any form such as a brochure, jingle, logo or advertisement. Remind the group it is not the actual product but the information about the group's strengths, qualities and uniqueness that the advertising company will consider. Allow enough time for groups to put an outline together and have each group present their 'pitch'.

Ask

- *Was it easy to identify the strengths of your group members? Why?*
 - *How did you do this?*
 - *How well did you work as a team while you were preparing your 'pitch'?*
 - *What did you learn about working with a team to achieve a goal in a short period of time?*
 - *What skills are important when you have to work quickly as a team to achieve a goal or the 'pitch'?* (Have students verbalise the skills eg negotiation, planning, listening, leadership, goal setting).
 - *How are these skills useful in other life situations?*
4. Ask students to think of a job they would like to apply for and using the knowledge of their own personal strengths and qualities, write an application. Encourage students to think of weird and wonderful jobs that may require a range of strengths such as lion tamer, nuclear scientist, social media developer or magician. For example, 'My strength in capturing information and showing it in a visual format was recognised when I won an art competition last year.'



Who am I?

✂	Adam Goodes	Barack Obama	Kylie Minogue
✂	Michael Clarke	Leyton Hewitt	Jessica Mauboy
✂	Nicole Kidman	Cinderella	Serena Williams
✂	The Queen	Sir Donald Bradman	Prince William
✂	Elvis Presley	Bill Gates	Oprah Winfrey
✂	Arnold Schwarzenegger	Batman	Brad Pitt
✂	Wonder Woman	Pink	Harry Potter
✂			



Who am I?

Pablo Picasso	Superman	David Beckham	
Roger Federer	Adam Hills	Captain James Cook	
Dame Edna	Hugh Jackman	Ned Kelly	
James Bond	Tiger Woods	Neil Armstrong	
Lisa Simpson	Jamie Oliver	Sir Richard Attenborough	
The Wiggles	Katy Perry	Dr Fiona Wood	
			

Activity 2 Identifying strengths and qualities in yourself and others



Learning intention

- Students identify a range of strengths and qualities

Equipment

Activity sheet – *Using strengths and qualities* – photocopy one card per student

Family information sheet – *Building your teen's character strengths* – photocopy one per student

Activities

1. Place students in pairs. Give each pair a scenario card from the activity sheets *Using strengths and qualities*. Explain that students are to read the scenario and answer the questions. Students then form groups of four. Pairs take turns to share their scenario and discuss what they thought the character would be thinking and what strengths or qualities the character could use and why.
2. As a class, discuss if certain strengths or qualities were used a lot in most scenarios such as courage, good communicator or decision maker.
3. Give each student an envelope and five slips of paper. Ask students to write five strengths or qualities that they possess. Suggest that each student takes their envelope home and asks a parent to write the strengths and qualities they believe their child possesses on the front of the envelope. Students can then compare these to those they have placed inside the envelope.
4. Send home a copy of the Family information sheet – *Building your teen's character strengths* with each student to share with their family.



Using your strengths

SCENARIO 1

Josh and his family are at a relative's wedding. Some of the other teenagers have moved out into the garden and are drinking bottles of wine. Josh has never had a drink of alcohol. The teenagers offer a bottle to Josh and say it's okay if he tries some and if he gets drunk the adults will be there to help him. Josh doesn't want to drink the wine.

What might Josh be saying to himself right now?

What could he do?

What strength could Josh use?

How would he use this strength?

SCENARIO 2

Tess has met up with some of her friends at the local shops. One of her friends suggests that Tess buys a packet of cigarettes for the group because she looks the oldest. Tess doesn't smoke and knows she will get grounded if her parents find out.

What might Tess be saying to herself right now?

What could she do?

What strength could Tess use?

How would she use this strength?

SCENARIO 3

Max and his mates have caught the train to a footy match. His parents have agreed to him getting home by 9pm. After the game his mates suggest they go into town and hang out around the mall. Time goes by quickly and suddenly Max realises it's nearly 9pm. A brother of his mate offers to drive him home but Max thinks he has been drinking alcohol.

What might Max be saying to himself right now?

What could he do?

What strength could Max use?

How would he use this strength?



Using your strengths



SCENARIO 4

Lisa is at home with Rachel, her best friend. Everyone else has gone out. Rachel has found a bottle of champagne in the fridge and has started drinking it. She is sounding drunk and is talking really loud and wants to swim in the pool. Lisa knows her parents will be upset about her friend drinking.

What might Lisa be saying to himself right now?

What could she do?

What strength could Lisa use?

How would she use this strength?



SCENARIO 5

Mick has been invited to an 18th birthday party. When he gets there he notices that a group of his mates are smoking a bong. They pass the bong to Mick and dare him to have a go. Mick's never smoked tobacco or cannabis.

What might Mick be saying to himself right now?

What could he do?

What strength could Mick use?

How would he use this strength?



SCENARIO 6

Amy and Nina are at a beach party. Most of the other kids are drinking so Nina decides to join in. After a while Amy notices that Nina is staggering a bit and she is walking down the beach with a boy that neither of them know. Nina's mum will be picking them up soon.

What might Amy be saying to herself right now?

What could she do?

What strength could Amy use?

How would she use this strength?





Building your teen's character strengths

In the classroom, your child has been learning about how to build skills such as decision making, goal setting and problems predicting. These are all skills that contribute to building their resilience and wellbeing.

We have also been learning that character strengths such as self-regulation, perseverance and love of learning are not only the foundations of positive youth development and thriving, but are related to school success, life satisfaction and wellbeing. Some ideas that can help you to play a key role in building your children's character strengths include:

Give meaningful and specific praise

When your child does something noteworthy, let them know by using comments that target the particular character strength shown.

You showed great leadership today when you encouraged your team to do their best even when they were down by 20 points.

I'm really proud of the way you supported your friend when they were being bullied by those other kids.

Telling me about your friends smoking cannabis took a lot of courage. I appreciate you being honest with me.

Help your teenager to recognise the character strengths they possess

Sometimes teenagers can become focused more on what they can't do than what they can do. Tell your child the strengths that you know they have (be honest) and how these strengths make them the wonderful person they are. Ask your child if there is a strength that they would like to build on and work out a plan together to help them start practising this strength more often.

Encourage your teenager to say positive things about themselves

What we think in our minds can contribute strongly to what we believe about ourselves. This is why it is so important that we start saying positive things about ourselves many times each and every day. Have your children write a list of at least 10 positive statements to say to themselves each day.

Write these on a list stuck to the fridge

I am important.

I matter.

I am worthwhile.

I am unique.

I will be what I want to be.

I know what I can do.

I can handle things.

I am strong.

I accept myself.

I can change my life.

Help your teenager recognise character strengths in others

It is not only important that your child becomes aware of their own character strengths but they also need to recognise and acknowledge strengths in others. Try reading books or watching movies where strengths are used by the characters. Have conversations and ask questions to develop your child's awareness of the strengths shown by fictional and real-life characters. For example:

What strengths did the characters show?

How did the characters use their strengths to overcome challenges and obstacles?

How was this character like you?

How was this character not like you?

Would you like to be more like this character? Why?

thankful optimistic leadership fair creative
 modesty perseverance good friend forgiveness self-disciplined
 courageous curiosity empathy kind
 humour honesty open-mind